Week ending August 20 1955 *Every Wednesday Fourpence*

JOHN BULL

- **Watchdog of the West, by W. E. Armstrong**
- **Stories by Robert Standish and Geoff Lucy**
- **Two men fight the Sahara Desert in a car**
- **'SEA-WYF AND BISCUIT': J. M. Scott's magnificent novel of shipwreck adventure**

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EDITORIAL

School tyranny

MORE than six million children now on holiday will go back to their desks early in September. They will leave them again for about a month in the winter, followed by at least two weeks off next Easter.

This is the time-honoured ritual of British schools. Although most children get seventy days' holiday a year, forty to forty-five of them are taken from the end of July. Their fathers average an annual ten and a half days' main holiday.

Since few parents want to risk that in the British climate in spring or winter, that means going away in August.

EVERY year this causes an outcry from parents. This year the controversy was started by Mrs. Daphne Bradshaw, a Norfolk clergyman's wife with four children.

"Surely," says Mrs. Bradshaw, "in this country of uncertain climate, where summer days are so precious, it is especially ridiculous that our children should be on holiday for a month in the winter, and again in the early spring—and then have to work, and take examinations, during the year's longest and sunniest days."

MRS. DAPHNE BRADSHAW
"It is ridiculous"

Behind Mrs. Bradshaw are ranged powerful economic interests—transport, hotels and catering, and many industries in which life would be easier if only the schools would let the nation stagger its holidays. Seaside prices could be reduced. Trains would be less crowded. In offices and factories, staffing difficulties would be eased.

There is nothing inevitable about the existing school timetable. American children have a long summer holiday, and little else. French schools have their *"grandes vacances"* from early July to the end of September, with merely a few days off in winter and spring.

THE Continental system may not be right for Britain. Mr. Frank Dawtry, secretary of the National Association of Probation Officers, warns that holidays that are too long "appear to put up the crime figures." The children get bored, and stray into mischief.

To meet that drawback, Alderman G. C. Adams, of Bristol, waged a campaign for two holidays, in early and late summer, with a spell of schooling in between. He got nowhere.

Indeed, the university examination boards, with their important examinations in June and July, veto any suggested reform of the school year.

Yet the crowded holiday problem is now serious. Britain's resorts hold about six million visitors at a time, but about eighteen million people want resort holidays. The schools' timetable thrusts them all towards August.

It is time for an official inquiry to assemble the facts—and break the schools' grip on family life.

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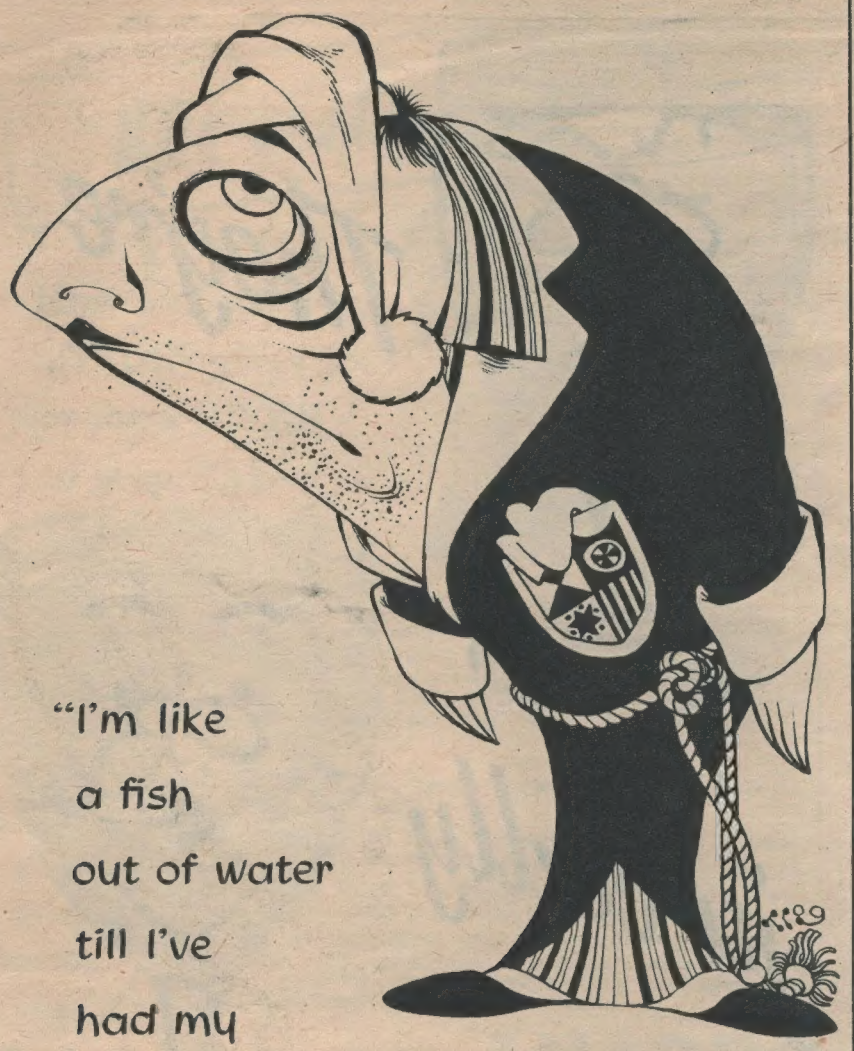

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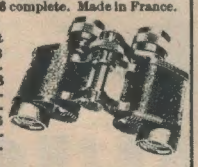

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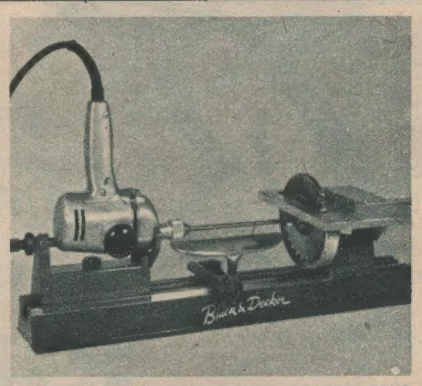

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AUGUST 20 1955 VOL. 98 NO. 2564 PHONE: TEMPLE BAR 2468 GRAMS: HEROICALLY, WESTCENT, LONDON

FREE SPEECH

Applause is getting out of hand

ONCE, people applauded to show their appreciation of merit; now they go into near-hysterics over nothing.

Test match bowlers are applauded for maiden overs when the batsmen have no need to make a stroke; top-class athletes are cheered for routine performances.

It's the same story in the theatre; curtain calls are prearranged, and mere competence causes plaudits to punctuate plays. Concert soloists do not need a "name" to be deluged with applause—often before they have played a note.

The fashion of indiscriminate clapping is encouraged by B.B.C. producers who "conduct" audience applause in the studio, to fit carefully planned pauses in the script.

Entertainers are not flattered by acclamation which lumps merit with mediocrity. We can blame ourselves if second-raters are foisted upon us.—A. C., Hayes, Middlesex.

On The Spot

NEAR Hanover, in Germany, I saw a dozen cows being milked in a field by a portable milking machine. It was driven off a universal type of farm vehicle which also ploughs, cuts corn and saws timber. Time and labour are saved by not having to drive the cows to the farm sheds for milking.—L. T., Celle, Germany.

"Mobile milking parlours sometimes are taken to the cows in the fields in this country," says the National Farmers' Union. "But milking cows in the open alongside a vehicle, in wet English weather, might break laws—concerning the dilution of milk, for example."

Water Delivery

A VOLCANIC eruption, in 1946, ended the picturesque "tin can mail" system of delivering mail at the island of Niuafoou, Tonga ("Free Speech," April 9).

Incoming mail, sent to the islands once a week from New Zealand, was soldered into biscuit tins and thrown overboard to native swimmers. Outgoing mail was tied into parcels and placed on the end of three-foot-long poles.

Holding on to other poles, swimmers put the mail into buckets lowered over the sides of ships.—C. H. BUTCHER, Napier, New Zealand.

Double Edged

THE Ministry of Agriculture has been making payments of a shilling for each grey squirrel killed. Now it is subsidizing cartridges for twelve- and sixteen-bore shot guns used in organized shoots of wood pigeons.

These pigeons would never have hatched had the squirrels been left alive to eat the eggs.—W. V. HOUGH, Wallasey, Cheshire.

"We take the advice of experts in these matters," says the Ministry of Agriculture. "Although wood pigeons are a menace, grey squirrels cost the country hundreds of thousands of pounds a year."

Best Foot Forward

AT my boarding school in Devon, twenty years ago, the second Sunday before the end of term was "kick the door" day, when we were allowed to kick hard—one kick each—at a back door of the school, with the aim of smashing it. On the last Sunday of term we wore odd socks.—T. MARSHALL, Dartford, Kent.

Furry Fury

IT is good to know of the kind care Fred Salmon gives to animals of all shapes and sizes at London Airport (JOHN BULL, July 30).

I was at the airport when a crate arrived containing a lion cub, sent by the International Association of

Lion Clubs, in America, to replace Sir Winston Churchill's lion, Rota. After a great deal of snarling—for the baby in the crate was upset by its long Atlantic journey—the airline staff jokingly attached a "danger" notice to the crate.

The cub—called Rusty by its keepers—lives at London Zoo.—C. S., Peterborough, Northants.

Money Wise

FOR the life of me I cannot understand all this concern about the popularity of hire purchase. If more goods are being bought by instalments, then more goods are being made and sold, and there is fuller employment. The argument that it is bad for a nation to live on credit is nonsense to me. The Americans have done it successfully for years, and with our National Debt at such fantastic proportions it seems that the Exchequer is doing, on a world-wide scale, what it discourages us from doing at home. — L. PAYNE, Ealing, London.

"Unlike most other countries, we have to import many raw materials

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

Beginning a dramatic series of eye-witness articles

CROSSROADS OF THE WORLD

On a four-month tour of the Near East, Harry Hopkins visited lands where history is shaped. Don't miss the first of his three articles on

CYPRUS

In JOHN BULL next week

"I've got it... Greengage pie and cream!"

What an inspiration it is! Nestlé's Cream on your pantry shelf ready to honour all occasions. True country cream, pure and sweet as mountain air. Cream that gives a meal that lavish touch and makes a dish of fruit a dish to remember. Keep Nestlé's Cream by you – perfection stored – till the very moment you need it.

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Real cream. Very special

Who could ask for anything more!

A DOUBLE DIAMOND works wonders

FREE SPEECH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

and half of our food," says an economist. "We cannot afford to do too well at home, through hire purchase, at the expense of exports. Our trade deficit in the first half of the year was £455 million, which reflected on the stability of our credit abroad. The U.S.A., mindful of the disastrous prewar slump, is not unperturbed by a national h.p. credit equal to £11,330 million, including £4,300 million owed for cars alone, bought on the 'never never.'"

Dangerous Snubs

I AGREE that children should be able to swim ("Free Speech," July 23), but sea-bathing tragedies will go on while holidaymakers snub beach patrols and ignore danger flags. Non-swimmers give the least trouble, as usually they play about at the water's edge. Over-confident swimmers should heed the warnings of local "spoil sports" who know the danger spots. —H. G., Scarborough, Yorkshire.

Listening In

THE cartoon showing a doctor using a stethoscope to diagnose the failure of his car engine (JOHN BULL, July 23), is not quite as ludicrous as it may appear. In the aircraft industry a stethoscope is used to locate

"Listening in" to a car engine

air leaks in pressurized fuselages. The instrument is also used in some car factories to "listen" for irregular engine noises.—D. BOWKER, Rhyl, Flintshire.

Between Two Fires

WHEN four houses were built very quickly, in our village, the locals said: "Huh! I wouldn't want to live in one of those houses. Jerry built!"

Builders are blamed for slow work, but when they get on with the job, this is their reward.—MISS M. S. N., Garforth, Yorkshire.

Rugged Peaks

THE attractive story, "Whisky Special" (JOHN BULL, July 30), breathes the authentic Cumberland atmosphere.

Only a man who lives in wild places could have written it, and in fact Dudley Hoys has kept a farm in Eskdale for nine years.

He began to write after the first World War—he served in both wars —and though he lived for a time in Sussex I believe his heart always dwelt among the bleak valleys and the bleaker moors.

Bird watching and mountaineering are among his diversions.—A. P., Carlisle, Cumberland.

Hoys's book about the mountains and the fells, "Below Scafell," is due to be published on September 1.

Impotent Sun

WITH the thermometer in the eighties, I was surprised to see how many children on the beach had no protection for their heads. They

seemed to be asking for a dose of sunstroke.—MRS. M. MACGREGOR, Nairn, Scotland.

"The theory that sun on the back of your neck causes sunstroke has been exploded," says a doctor. "Topees issued to British troops in the Middle East during the war were replaced by forage caps without ill effects. Sunstroke in Britain is very rare. So is heatstroke, although this can be contracted wherever it is hot, like the stokehold of a ship.

Without Passports

MR. G. Anderson, who went to Moscow without leaving Scotland ("Free Speech," July 23), could also visit Cairo, Egypt, Moscow, the walls of Jericho and the Bay of Biscay, all in the Thornton and Heaton districts of Bradford. — J. M. COGAN, Idle, Bradford.

. . . Among many other "foreign" places in Britain are Hong Kong at Scarborough, the Khyber Pass (Whitby), Melbourne (Derby), and Philadelphia, Washington and Quebec, all in Durham.—T. B. KETTLE, Scarborough.

Modest Loaves

ALL bread should be wrapped before sale, not just cut bread sold in wafer-thin slices. Or don't the bakers make enough profit from the extra penny charged on a wrapped loaf?—MRS. E. WOLFE, Cambridge.

"Wrapped cut bread is sold in several thicknesses," says a baker. "The cost of the paper, and the sealing process, uses most of the extra penny charged, and many housewives are not prepared to pay it." Nearly all bread in the U.S.A. is wrapped.

John Bull pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech," and at the usual rates for photographs. Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to the John Bull Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post

THIS WEEK'S COVER

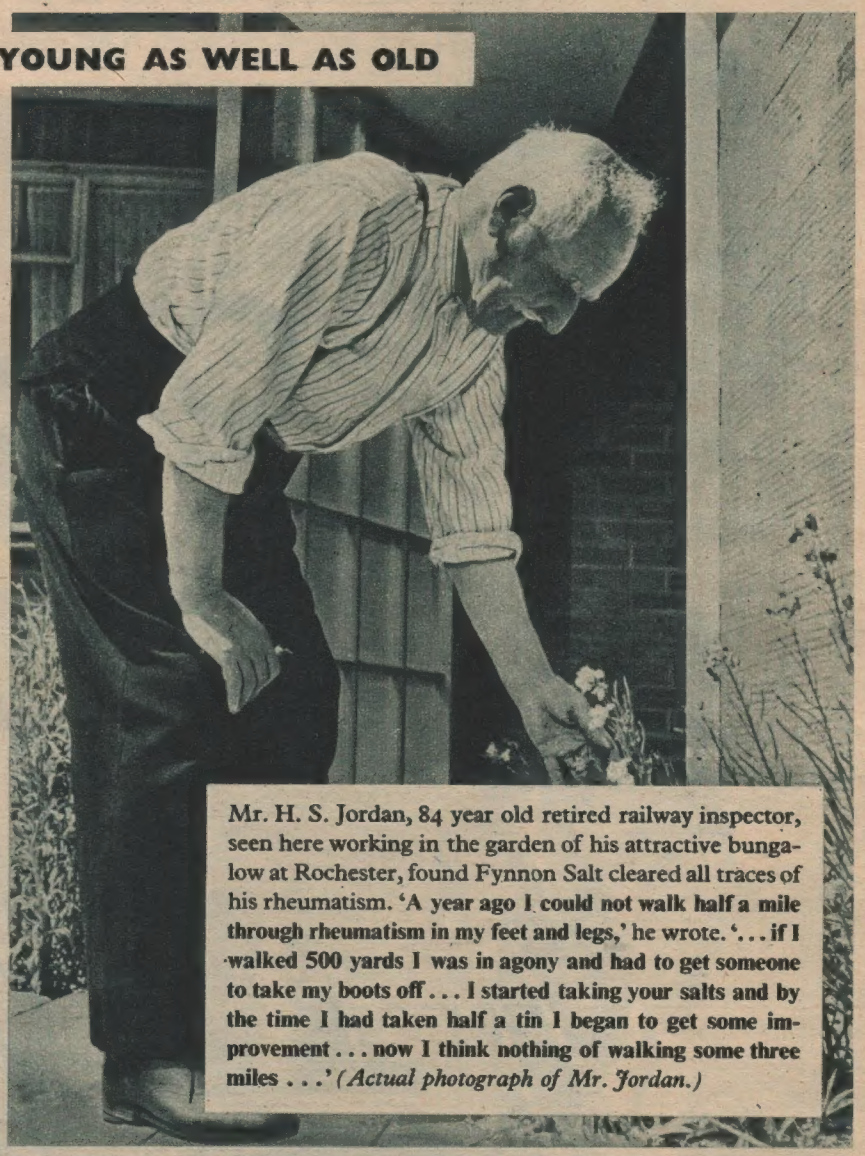
WHEREVER there's a GB plate there's usually a tea kettle, but the charm of the Italian Riviera is that visitors so quickly feel like natives. Soon that Primus stove will be condemned to dark idleness with the spare wheel, and *vino rosso* will be the family drink. Tomorrow, George Ditton's new arrivals at the fishing town of Noli will breakfast on fresh peaches and for lunch there will be sardines, deliciously grilled over hot embers. Ditton himself knows the allure of this sunlit world. But this year he's camping in Cornwall—with his wife, four children, a nanny and a poodle. "It's a second holiday," he says. "Painting this cover was the first."

MOTHER OF SIX (30) AND RETIRED RAILWAY INSPECTOR (84) BOTH FOUND

Rheumatic misery relieved by using FYNNON SALT

RHEUMATISM ATTACKS YOUNG AS WELL AS OLD

Mrs. M.C., 30, housewife of Kilkeel, Co. Down (who wishes to remain anonymous), finds her six active children keep her pretty busy. She writes: '. . . I was suffering . . . with rheumatism. I got all kinds of rubs and liniments all to no avail. A friend told me about Fynnon Salt . . . I had a few tins . . . began to feel relief . . . now my rheumatism has completely vanished. I still take . . . Fynnon salt first thing in the morning and I feel wonderful the whole day.' *(Photograph posed by a model.) The originals of these letters can be seen at our offices.*



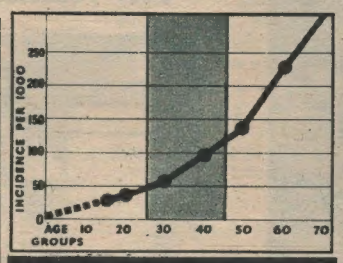
Mr. H. S. Jordan, 84 year old retired railway inspector, seen here working in the garden of his attractive bungalow at Rochester, found Fynnon Salt cleared all traces of his rheumatism. 'A year ago I could not walk half a mile through rheumatism in my feet and legs,' he wrote. '. . . if I walked 500 yards I was in agony and had to get someone to take my boots off . . . I started taking your salts and by the time I had taken half a tin I began to get some improvement . . . now I think nothing of walking some three miles . . .' *(Actual photograph of Mr. Jordan.)*

Encouraging news for Britain's one million adult rheumatic sufferers

IF YOU are suffering from this painful, stubborn and often disabling complaint, these letters will be encouraging news. For these experiences of a busy young housewife and an active older man are by no means isolated cases—both letters are typical of hundreds we have received from sufferers of all ages, expressing gratitude for the way Fynnon Salt has relieved their rheumatic pain. This is not surprising when you consider that Fynnon provides a treatment which is in complete accordance with modern scientific findings on rheumatism.

Early treatment advised

Findings show that rheumatism occurs most among the over 65s. **But it was also found that fibrositis, neuritis, lumbago and the less persistent forms of rheumatism mostly attack those between the ages of 25 and 45.** While the number of these cases appears to decline among elderly people, a proportion develop in later years into the more persistent kind of rheumatism, emphasising the need for early treatment.



This chart gives a conservative picture of rheumatism in Great Britain. The revelation that rheumatism often starts in middle life stresses the advisability of early treatment.

Fynnon's Two-Way Action

There is general agreement among the medical profession that improper elimination of waste products from the body accompanies and contributes to rheumatic conditions—such as neuritis, sciatica, fibrositis and gout. This emphasis on waste elimination explains why Fynnon Salt's two-way action has proved of such benefit to so many.

1. Fynnon Salt is an effective but gentle aperient working on the scientific principles of osmosis. This natural process utilises body fluid, drawn into the intestinal canal, to rid the system of waste matter.

2. It acts as a diuretic, flushing and clearing the kidneys and reducing the concentration of impurities in the blood—the approved treatment for certain rheumatic conditions.

The special virtue of Fynnon Salt lies in the even balance of its aperient and diuretic properties. Salts commonly have one or the other property to a marked degree, but Fynnon Salt has both in almost equal measure. Thus, by itself, Fynnon Salt is a complete internal cleansing agent. In composition it resembles the waters of certain spas, long famous for their success in treating rheumatism. *Act on first twinges—for Fynnon's unique combination of mineral salts can help you most if taken early, before the first twinges become a regular discomfort.*

A double treatment for rheumatism

Because there may be a number of causes of rheumatism, no possible line of attack should be ignored. Many enthusiastic users of Fynnon Salt are gaining especial benefit from the additional use of Fynnon Balm which is an entirely different, yet complementary, treatment for rheumatism, bringing 'deep relief' to underlying tissues and muscles by soothing away rheumatic pain. Either treatment can prove effective on its own, but many sufferers will obtain the greatest benefit from the two treatments used in combination. **But, if you are seriously worried about your condition, don't fail to consult your doctor.**

FYNNON SALT

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For the relief of RHEUMATISM · FIBROSITIS
NEURITIS · SCIATICA · LUMBAGO · GOUT

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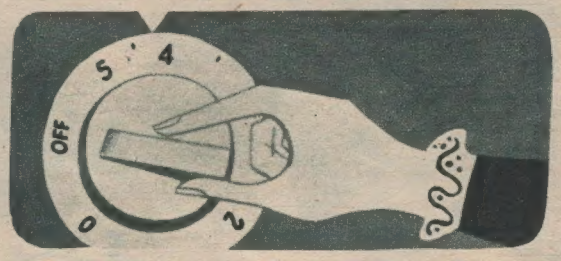
Of course it's quick -it's electric!

There's many a time in the kitchen when every second counts. And a modern electric cooker *never* wastes a woman's time, for electric cooking's really quick. There are super-speed radiant boiling plates which reach full cooking heat in a matter of seconds — ideal for warming the milk for coffee or doing the scrambled eggs for breakfast.

When it comes to superb cooking you must have perfect heat control. That's where electric cookers really score. There's no guesswork—you simply set the dial to the exact heat you want. And the thermostat control on the electric oven is wonderful for baking and roasts.



An electric cooker is so easy to keep clean. There's neither grime nor moisture in electric heat. All the cooker surfaces are smooth, too — a quick wipe with a damp cloth and they sparkle. The whole kitchen stays clean with an electric cooker. Decorate the kitchen just as you like — paintwork, distemper and even wallpaper stay fresh for years.

Just add up all the advantages of an electric cooker: superb *quick* cooking; easy *exact* control; a *clean* kitchen; safety. There's nothing to beat an electric cooker!

The electric cooker is one of the
Four Foundations of Modern Living

Call in at your Electricity Service Centre **. . . where you can see a range of modern electric cookers, get helpful advice and hear all about very attractive easy terms.**

Issued by the Electrical Development Association

Fifteen nations form a mighty peacetime alliance. W. E. Armstrong surveys Nato and its strong man in Europe, General Gruenther . . .

WATCHDOG OF THE WEST

AT ELEVEN O'CLOCK on May 9 this year, General Alfred Gruenther, Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, saluted the flag of the German Federal Republic as it was sent up to join those of the fourteen other member nations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. It was, perhaps, one of the most important moments in the history of NATO; it was certainly one for which Gruenther, as a soldier, had been waiting impatiently for years. The twelve divisions and the 1,300 tactical aircraft which Germany is due to provide will go a long way to fill the "gap in the shield" of European defence.

A few minutes later a British staff officer, returning from the ceremony, found a note on his table. Written earlier that morning, it was short, to the point, and signed "G."

"A French sergeant broke his leg yesterday," it said. "Please let me know how he is."

The arrival of the Germans might be a landmark, but Gruenther saw no reason why a ceremony, however historic, should distract him from his day-to-day attention to the smooth running of every cog in the greatest military machine ever assembled in times of peace.

To the four hundred officers who work at SHAPE—Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe—the note was the latest specimen of what they have christened "Gruenthergrams." Several of these terse but courteous directives are issued to various departments every day (the record is fifty-four in twelve hours) and can cover such widely differing subjects as a demand for all the anti-religious references in the works of Karl Marx, the possibilities of installing a dictaphone in an

Gruenther leaves the National Assembly building in Paris. As Supreme Commander in Europe, he keeps statesmen on their toes. "If NATO breaks up," he says, "we can lose in the West—bullets or no bullets"

General Gruenther (third from left) inspects SHAPE's mobile headquarters with officers of NATO forces. He hustles his team, but has no mercy on himsel

aircraft and instructions to remove a cat from the roof of the Supreme Commander's office.

This sometimes intimidating passion for exact and eclectic information is characteristic of a soldier who is acknowledged to have been the most able Chief of Staff to emerge from the allied—or enemy—forces during the second World War. Almost by definition, a staff officer must be gnawed by curiosity. It is his rôle to gather, correlate and submit to his superior all the data on which decisions depend, and to ensure that such decisions are acted on.

As Supreme Allied Commander in Europe—SACEUR—Gruenther now has his data provided by someone else, and as ex-Chief of Staff successively to Generals Eisenhower and Ridgway, his predecessors at SHAPE, he has an unrivalled knowledge of what that means.

What nobody can shoulder for him is his task of persuading the representatives of fifteen different governments that the enormous expenditure of effort, men and money imposed on their peoples must be kept up and even increased if peace is to be maintained.

Gruenther has no illusions about the magnitude of that problem. He remembers, ruefully, the findings of an inquiry in 1953 which showed that only two in ten Americans and English citizens, and only one in ten Frenchmen, had any idea of what the initials NATO—and by association SHAPE—stood for.

Characteristically, he makes no effort to play down the gravity of the situation from a military point of view. He says bluntly that in spite of the great progress made since the North Atlantic Treaty was signed in 1949, it is very doubtful if the western powers could defeat an all-out Russian attack if it came today. In 1949, when the West had no more than fourteen weakened divisions and nine hundred obsolescent aircraft, all the Russians had to do, as Gruenther expresses it, was to "start walking."

Both from the strategic and material aspects the situation has changed dramatically since then, but full immunity is still a long way ahead. NATO forces are strong, even very strong, and it is precisely that strength which Gruenther has learned to distrust. To him, as he flies round Europe on his tours of inspection, as he confers with, sounds and cajoles statesmen and public men of the fifteen nations which contribute men and armaments to his command, the danger of complacency is as great a threat to the western alliance as its present inadequacy of force.

Two Years To Train A Fighter

Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe is the military tool of NATO, which is a political brain. As Supreme Commander of the naval, land and air forces of NATO's European forces, Gruenther may not officially criticize or influence national measures. But he makes it quite clear that in his opinion an efficient sailor, soldier or airman cannot be made in less than two years training; and that any curtailment of the period of military service, any serious monetary reduction of service estimates, could bring serious results until two new factors have had time to take effect: the satisfactory development of tactical atomic weapons, and the full participation of western Germany in NATO. These two things will not come about for some years.

But what must continue for twenty, thirty, fifty or more years, Gruenther stresses, is the western alliance, whatever its name. "We know that alliances succeed when the bullets are flying," he says. "But what everyone must realize, from the ordinary tax-paying citizen to a commanding general, is that we can lose in the west if this organization is weakened or breaks up—whether the bullets are flying or not. There is no alternative. Our future as free peoples depends on that."

At a press conference at SHAPE some months ago, the Supreme Commander was asked if his forces were strong enough to hold a beach head. He replied that they were, if such was their objective. But he went on to state that his command was not organized to plan withdrawals. They were there to stay, he said, and they intended to stay.

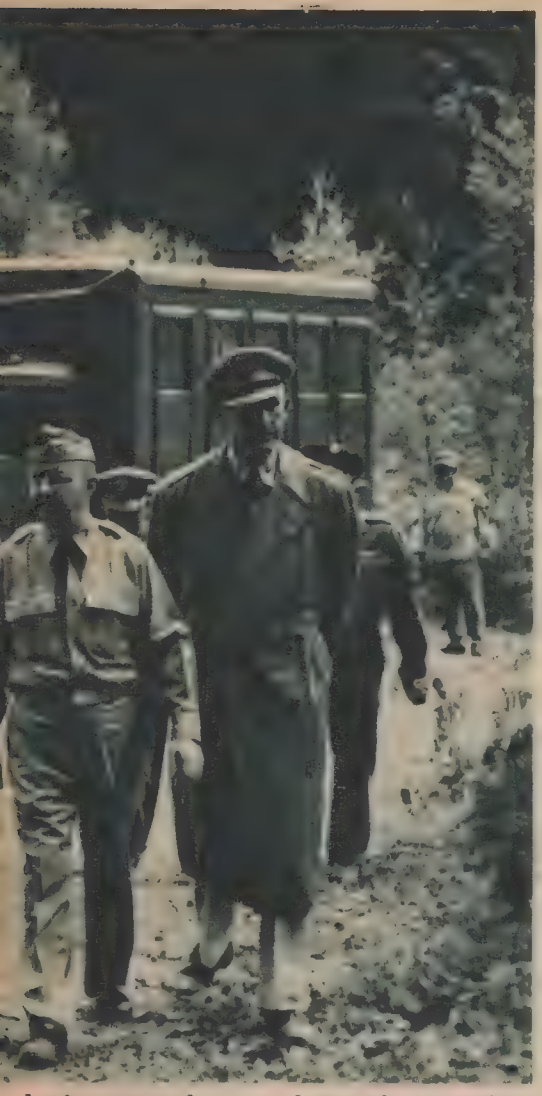
What makes General Gruenther believe that they can stay is the inter-allied machine which has been built up since the North Atlantic Treaty, one of the shortest documents of its kind ever produced, proclaimed as its first objective the determination of member governments to "safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law."

The member governments of NATO are now Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Federal Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States. Linked to these by a variety of aid agreements are Spain, Yugoslavia and French North Africa.

To control the efficient co-operation of forces throughout the NATO region three main areas, each under a supreme commander, have been established. They are the Atlantic, Channel and European Commands, known respectively as SACLANT, CHANCOM and SACEUR.

An American admiral commands SACLANT from his headquarters in Norfolk, Virginia; a British admiral, who is also Commander in Chief, Portsmouth, is head of the Channel Command. Both these commands, which are predominantly naval, are briefed to keep open the ocean lanes along which the convoys will come in to supply the forward line of the western alliance. That line is the European Command, under General Gruenther, which is responsible for the defence of the allied countries of continental Europe against invasion.

On a purely numerical count the advantage is heavily with the U.S.S.R. and its satellites. The



—he is constantly at work, mostly in uniform

The four thousand mile defensive sickle of the NATO countries (shaded grey) stretches from Norway to Turkey. It aims to prove that attack would be futile and bring fatal retaliation

Soviet ground forces consist of 180 ground divisions, including sixty-five tank and mechanized divisions. These are the regular troops, the Soviet Army. In addition, there are more than eighty divisions of Polish, Hungarian, Bulgarian, Rumanian and Albanian units, nearly a million men. The grand total means that in the U.S.S.R., eastern Germany and the eastern European satellites, there are today more than six million men under arms. SHAPE experts believe that a full mobilization of Soviet and satellite force would see four hundred divisions in the field on all fronts within thirty days, supported by 25,000 aircraft flying from 360 air bases. Of these aircraft, all the fighters, and almost all medium bombers, are jets.

The forces of the Soviet bloc are equipped with the most modern weapons. Its economy permits, and will go on permitting, the stockpiling of more than enough tanks, mortars and anti-tank guns to replace any forseeable wastage. Lately, Soviet technicians have made startling advances in the field of atomic and biological warfare. The Soviet research on guided missiles is at least on a parity with ours. Mobilization schemes are efficient and frequently tested. The U.S.S.R. is equipped to go to war.

The Cold Figures Of Defence

What can the Atlantic alliance, on the four thousand mile sickle of the NATO defence line, stretching from Norway to Anatolia, oppose in land and air forces to this apparently crushing potential of men and material?

In cold figures, not more than ninety to a hundred divisions in various states of readiness, and between five thousand and six thousand tactical aircraft flying from 160 bases. Of these divisions fewer than fifty could take part in the first few days of fighting, supported by possibly two thousand combat aircraft. The ground forces which could be engaged on D-day, and

Continued on page 28

Sir Basil Embry (left) commands the CINCENT air force, the largest in NATO. Lieutenant-General Baretta heads the Netherlands air force, which contributes planes and men to Sir Basil's command

SEA-WYF AND BISCUIT

by J. M. SCOTT

ILLUSTRATED BY K. J. PETTS

They had drifted through the burning day, without food and without water. Now they had been found—by an enemy submarine

IT WAS FEBRUARY 15, 1942. The cargo boat San Felix was in the Indian Ocean, nine days out of Singapore, bound for Mombasa, when the torpedo struck. She was packed from bows to stern with refugees—over a thousand of them. The lucky ones drowned. The unlucky were still clinging to floating debris when the sharks arrived. . . .

But perhaps the unluckiest of all were those with places in the lifeboats. When dawn brought an end to that terrible night, they had to face the sun. They had no water and little hope of rescue.

Some distance away from the overcrowded boats, two men shared a rubber float. Towards the end of that first sweltering day they began to fight. They fell off the float, still struggling, and vanished in the water.

Sunset was blazing in the sky when a woman went over the side of one of the boats. Nobody took much notice; people had been jumping into the sea all day. But the woman did not disappear as the others had—she swam towards the float. It was an alternative to further days of torture in the packed lifeboats, and a man dived in to follow her; then another. . . . All three reached the float safely.

The brief dusk was already turning into night when a third man ploughed through the sea towards them. "There is no room," the men on the float said together. But the woman knelt and helped the swimmer aboard. It was then they saw that he had only one leg. He was the half-caste purser of the San Felix.

The three men and the woman did not introduce themselves. They were too far removed from ordinary life to bother. Instead they used nicknames associated with their instinctive reactions to one another. Presumably the one-legged man knew their real names. But, if so, he never spoke them.

He became Number Four. The woman was called Sea-Wyf. Biscuit and Bulldog were the names given to the other men. . . .

PART TWO

Shapes In The Dark

As, consciously or unconsciously, they tried to escape from their real selves, so they did their best to get away from the scene of the disaster. During most of the night they took turns to paddle.

The float was lozenge-shaped, its buoyancy and most of its rigidity depending on the inflated tubes which formed the sides. This made it awkward to use a paddle efficiently when sitting on the slats of wood which covered the float bottom. So Biscuit and Bulldog knelt on one knee or the other. But they very soon became cramped, while the pain in the knee itself was not a thing to be borne for long.

Sea-Wyf, who took her turn as a matter of course, was either more supple or more stoical about this, but her arms were weak. Much the most efficient paddler was Number Four. He squatted—to use Biscuit's expression—"cross-legged, except that he only had one," and his back was long enough to enable him to use the paddle to good effect.

They had discussed the course they ought to steer.

"Do you know where we were?" Bulldog asked Number Four. "No, you wouldn't. You weren't concerned with that side of things."

Number Four said nothing.

"Well, I reckon, from the time we were on the ship, we must be about two thousand miles west of Sumatra. That's just about the middle of the ocean, I suppose."

Biscuit nodded.

"No good trying to go back," Bulldog went on in a slow, painful croak, "no good going south——"

"No bloody good going west, if there's still two thousand miles to Africa," Biscuit said.

"Then north——"

"We must be south of the equator. If you feel like crossing the equator, I don't. Not very

much point going anywhere for that matter."

"There is! Apart from getting somewhere, we don't want an invasion from the boats."

The argument had been settled by a slight breeze which began to blow from the south-east. They went with it, north-westward.

The two who were not paddling reclined in the bow and stern, the paddlers being side by side amidships. They changed places with the utmost care. If anyone went overboard, he might be left behind. They did not quite trust each other for help in getting back on board. Only for a few minutes had they seen one another's faces, and that was hours ago. They had become dark shapes, bodies which it was almost impossible not to touch, unknowns who might react with violence.

The memory of the frenzied boats was still vivid. They had learned that human beings can be as dangerous as high explosive.

THE dawn light came at last and faded into the cruel blue of the sky. They saw each other clearly then. Biscuit appeared to be in the worst condition of the four. His face was haggard, his eyes deep sunk and ringed with shadow, and he was continually licking his dry lips. He was wearing only a pair of shorts. His lean body was hairy and muscular, but his limbs drooped.

Bulldog had on a shirt with one sleeve torn off and a pair of silk underpants. His unathletic legs were white as a fish's belly and his long face was red, puffy about the eyes. But his mouth was firm. He was evidently determined to go on living.

To begin with, neither he nor Biscuit could take their eyes off Sea-Wyf. In spite of their exhaustion, their burning thirst, the hunger cramps in their stomachs, they were still men enough to wonder how in the San Felix they had failed to notice her.

Even in her pitiable condition her face was lovely—youthful and bravely near serene. It was crowned by black hair cut short as a boy's, tousled and curly. Her skin was the colour of honey. Her nose was small and straight, her mouth rather wide. Although it was far from smiling, they felt that it knew how to smile.

But the most remarkable feature was the eyes. They were so dark that they seemed to be all pupil and therefore able to see and say far more than other eyes. . . . And there she sat curled up in the torn linen shift she wore, her remarkable eyes cast down.

The two Englishmen caught each other staring and both quickly turned away. They looked at

Sea-Wyf spoke to the interpreter. "Your commander described himself as humane. I appeal to him not to turn away, leaving us to die"

Number Four. He did not meet their glance, for he was still in manner the obsequious creature they had known in the San Felix. But, clad only in trunks and sitting down, he was like the statue of a Hercules cast in bronze.

His arms and shoulders were particularly well developed, no doubt from walking with crutch sticks. Yet he was still grotesque. To move about he had to use his hands as a seal does its flippers.

He may have been embarrassed by this scrutiny. At any rate, murmuring something about a bathe, he went over the side. For several minutes he swam about, playing like a dolphin; he seemed to belong to the water.

At last he came on board again, undulating over the side with the momentum of his swimming. There he heaved himself awkwardly into his place in the stern, smiling apologetically, and said that it was good to take a dip. You absorbed moisture through the skin. Did not the lady and gentlemen wish to bathe? He would keep watch for sharks.

None of them accepted.

After that, while the sun climbed higher in the sky and grew more hot, they sat for a while doing nothing, not even talking.

Sea-Wyf had not spoken since the evening before. She remained in the bow of the float with averted eyes, looking troubled—not afraid, but troubled.

Bulldog and Biscuit glanced at her occasionally. But Number Four in the stern watched her continuously, as if he were examining a picture. Seeing him doing this, Bulldog's face became even redder than before, and at last he burst out: "Can't you do anything else but stare, you unmannerly brute?"

Number Four's swarthy, round-eyed face became a picture of bewildered deprecation. He said that he had meant no offence. Later, he tried to start a conversation. But the two white men ignored him, and at last he sank into an offended silence.

The strain was broken by Sea-Wyf asking what something was. At one end of the float, under the curve of the side tube, she had noticed a sort of pocket. In it they found a triangular piece of red cotton which was evidently a sail.

Only then did they realize that a thin six-foot spar lashed along the axis of the flooring was a mast. The lashings, unravelled, formed three guys. The mast-foot fitted into a notch in the floorboards.

This discovery spurred them to a more careful examination of their craft. They found another and smaller pocket and in it a pump with a rubber tube ending in a nozzle which proved to fit into a valve in each of the lateral tubes of the float—an emergency means of inflation.

That was all they found, but it was enough to set the men talking while they stepped and guyed the mast.

"We'll push along much faster now," Bulldog said.

"Yes," said Biscuit. "We'll get nowhere in no time. My God, I could do with something to drink." He passed a flannelly tongue over his lips, and went on: "How far do you suppose we came last night?"

They all looked back. On all sides the sea spread away and away and away to the circular horizon. Distance did not have much meaning.

"Quite a long way," Bulldog said. The wind was freshening, and he was impatient to set sail.

Sea-Wyf interrupted the conversation by raising her hand for silence. She was listening.

They all listened, searching the sky, shading their eyes with their hands. At last they saw the aircraft—a silver insect against the dazzling blue. They stood up and waved the red sail. They knew it was no use—the machine was too far off, but since there had been one aeroplane there might be more. Their hopes rose.

"If we had been where we were last evening we'd have had a chance," Biscuit said.

The talk continued until it dried up—literally.

Long before noon it became impossible to sit on anything except the wooden slats of the flooring. The rubber had become so hot that it burned the skin, and it smelled sickeningly.

"We are riding much higher," Bulldog said.

"Good God, of course!" It was almost a shout from Biscuit. "Look how they've swelled. They'll burst!"

The tubes had been gradually yet steadily inflating as the air inside them expanded in the heat. Now they were as tight as drums.

"We must let some out," Biscuit said. He put his hand to one of the metal valves and drew it back, quickly flicking his fingers. He splashed water over the valve until it was cool. Then, with an effort, he turned it. The air came screaming out.

As Biscuit and Bulldog tried to close the valve together, the float rocked violently. At last they succeeded, and sat back on the floorboards exhausted. Presently Biscuit attended to the other valve.

"What about evening?" Bulldog asked. "When it gets cool."

"Then we must pump them up."

It was logic, but their craft seemed an even more fragile thing than it had before—frail as a bubble.

The heat became searing. It was impossible to paddle any more. They wetted the sail and tried to hold it up as an awning, but at noon the area of shade was scarcely enough for one person. Besides, the sun shone through the thin cotton. The sun was cruel and cunning, searching them out and scorching them.

They tried filling the biscuit tin over the side and pouring the water over their bodies. First Biscuit and then the other men took off their scant garments, damped them and put them on their heads. Sea-Wyf remained as she had all day, her eyes either downcast or staring out over the water.

For a long time none of them said anything. Only their stomachs spoke now and then, loudly and angrily. But the hunger pains were nothing to the continuous nagging thirst.

About mid-afternoon they saw another aircraft. Optimism soared again—and with reason, for this machine was much lower than the last, and seemed to be searching. But the aircraft finally disappeared to the north.

Painful though talking had become, they discussed this for some time. They were being searched for, not a doubt of it. Either an S O S had been picked up or else the first aircraft had reported seeing something on the water, and the Catalina—Bulldog said that the second aircraft was a Catalina—had been sent out. Within a day or two they were certain to be found.

"But we have got to stay alive meanwhile. Pray God for rain," Bulldog concluded. "It's thirst that's killing us."

Towards evening the Catalina appeared again. But it was a long way off. They did not even wave to it. With increasing depression and lassitude they waited for the night.

The cool of the evening revived them enough to undertake the alarming task of blowing up the tubes again. After that they sat in silence until one by one they dropped off into uneasy dreams.

They were awakened by the soft voice of Sea-Wyf.

"I hear something."

They listened. There was the lapping of water against the float. That was all Bulldog and Biscuit could hear. But when Number Four was appealed to by Sea-Wyf he agreed that there was something else.

"Where?"

He pointed up wind. They all continued to

Her tone was dangerous: "I will throw the stores

listen intently. Although anything must surely be better than nothing in that waste of ocean they felt their slow pulses quickening with fear of the unknown.

"It's an engine," Sea-Wyf said.

Wild thoughts raced through their minds. The Catalina had spotted the boats and come down on the water. Or a vessel had been sent out to the rescue. Whatever it was, they must get there.

They picked up the paddles and drove their little craft along.

Now and then they stopped to listen. Quite soon they could all hear it clearly, the steady chug-chug-chug of some motor. It did not sound like an aeroplane, or quite like a ship. It remained in the same place. But it was real—that was all which mattered. In spite of their

overboard," she said. Bulldog glared. "You fool! Do you think you are stronger than I am?"

exhaustion they paddled on and on. Then, when it must still have been a long way off, the sound ceased.

After listening for some time and hearing nothing, Bulldog and Biscuit began to paddle again. They had to force themselves to make the effort. They felt that another day without water would kill them. They *had* to find help before the murderous sun came up.

Sea-Wyf wanted to help but could not any more.

Number Four, although he had looked in fairly good condition before sunset, had merely let his paddle drift through the water. Either he was still offended by the angry words of the morning, on which he seemed to have been brooding since, or else he had resigned himself to die.

Sea-Wyf was in the bow. She was tense as a figurehead. And it was she who saw the thing. "There!"

The eastern sky had become a silvery grey. Looking where the girl pointed, they saw a dark bulge on the water. They tried to shout, which hurt their throats but produced practically no sound at all.

BISCUIT and Bulldog began paddling again, splashing out of time with each other, intoxicated with hope—with more than that, the certainty of rescue.

No voice came from the strange craft in front. But as they drew near they heard the sudden metallic click of a weapon being cocked. That stopped them paddling.

The next moment a blinding light shot out at them. It hurt their eyes so that they had to cover them. There was a whisper of voices. The light left them for perhaps ten seconds and swung round in a circle like a lighthouse beam. Then it pounced on them again and held them mercilessly while they cowered, naked, and with their hands over their faces, as if praying.

The float drifted on and bumped gently against the submarine. Somebody grabbed the looped rope and made it fast. The brilliant light went out but another—much less strong, probably a hand-torch—took its place. There was a murmur of unintelligible voices.

A voice rose, sharp and sudden, questioning. They did not understand. The question was repeated.

"English," Bulldog managed to say.

"Shipwrecked. Put that light out. Give us a drink," Biscuit croaked.

Again there was a murmur of voices. Then a new voice spoke from behind the light—high-pitched, staccato, on a single note.

"Who are you—English, American?"

"English," Bulldog answered, and the light was directed upon him.

"What are you doing?"

"We are on a pleasure cruise," Biscuit whispered.

The light switched to him. "What did you say?"

"Ship sunk night before last. No water or food."

After each question there was a murmur like an echo as the answer was interpreted.

"What was your ship?"

"San Felix," Bulldog answered.

"Speak more loudly, please. From which port?"

"Sing——" Bulldog's voice broke and he bent his head, coughing silently.

"Give us water if you want answers," said Biscuit, who had been working his throat muscles to lubricate them for this scarcely audible outburst.

"What did you say?"

Biscuit, who had the light on him, pointed at his dry tongue.

SOMEBODY in the submarine seemed to give an order. A minute later a metal container was handed in to the float. Sea-Wyf drank first, then the others. Feeling the liquid pouring into them was a sensation of exquisite pleasure—yet not satisfying. The water seemed to disappear into sand half-way down their throats. They wanted more. But when the container had gone round a second time it was empty. And they got no more, only questions.

What nationality was the San Felix? Her tonnage? How many passengers? Where were they now? Where had they been bound? What other ships had left Singapore at the same time, and where bound? What British and American warships were in the Indian Ocean? What bases were they using? Why had they thrown overboard their radio transmitter—the one with which they had signalled the Catalina?

Sea-Wyf and Number Four remained silent under this barrage of questions put in English by the impersonal voice. Bulldog or Biscuit answered some of them. To the rest they were silent or said they did not know. The water had made it possible to speak but they were lightheaded with weariness and hunger.

Meanwhile the sun broke surface and it was light. They saw the commander of the submarine, a square man, somehow patriarchal and out of place on a modern engine of war. He stood, head bowed and hands behind his back, aloof as in a shrine, not looking at them, listening only to the thin, spectacled interpreter by his side.

Near them were four or five sailors with weapons at the ready. It was fantastic, this armed suspicion facing four almost naked castaways who were near the limits of exhaustion. It was hard to realize they were not dreaming.

"You refuse to tell any more?" the interpreter

Continued on page 31

Caley au lait
Caley au lait itee

If it's chocolates you're after—yodel tally-ho for Caley Dari-Rich! It's a *milky* chocolate assortment—milky with full-cream milk. It's eleven-centred, and each centre pleads to be eaten first. Nuts, caramels, toffees, fruity-luscious creams, Turkish Delight . . . make your impossible choice! You're on the horns of a delicious dilemma.

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Mr. Pastry's bread and butter comedy

by JOHN SANDILANDS

Richard Hearne leads two lives. In the grizzled make-up of an ageing crank he has become a TV star—and now he's out of character as himself

IN A TELEVISION programme a few years ago, character comedian Richard Hearne surprised viewers by appearing in immaculate evening clothes. On a prop balcony overlooking a romantic Mediterranean scene, he recited a poem to a beautiful girl. Then he leaned nonchalantly on the balustrade—and shot out of sight as it collapsed.

Behind the scenes, studio carpenters had prepared for the stunt by building a platform for Hearne to fall on to just out of sight. But he overshot the safety device and landed twelve feet below the balcony on his head.

Semi-conscious, he had to be led to his place for the next scene which showed him in the familiar grizzled make-up, round brass spectacles and cutaway coat of his famous character Mr. Pastry.

"Dicky took the incident as a grim warning against stepping out of line," says a friend. Since Hearne assumed the rôle of Mr. Pastry, the kindly but misguided old gentleman whose whole existence is fraught with unfortunate accidents, he has had to live a double life.

An accomplished character actor—in 1947 he was offered three parts with the Old Vic company in Shakespearian plays—he has fought a losing battle to retain his identity against the competition of the ageing character he portrays.

He received more than three hundred invitations to perform opening ceremonies at fêtes, garden parties and other functions last year. "Every one," says Hearne, "stipulated that I should appear as Mr. Pastry."

When he visited a hospital during a provincial tour of the show *Mr. Pastry Comes To Town*, he started his round of the wards in an ordinary lounge suit. After patients in the first two wards had greeted him with polite smiles but scarcely a flicker of recognition, he returned to the theatre for his Mr. Pastry costume. For the rest of the visit he received delighted welcomes.

The slapstick antics of Mr. Pastry have brought Hearne rich financial rewards. In one week on American television this year, when he appeared before an estimated 120 million viewers, he received £2,500 in fees. On a previous trip, his earnings were calculated at £125 a minute.

At these rates, Hearne can afford to be philosophical about his dual personality, but he confesses to misgivings about the extent to which Mr. Pastry dominates his existence.

In appearance and manner he presents an exact antithesis of the ageing character he portrays. A youthful forty-six, with Puckish

Continued on page 46

Hearne admires an old spinning wheel with his wife, Yvonne, and their two daughters. He is seldom recognized without Mr. Pastry make-up

THE MAN WHO LIVED TWICE

by ROBERT STANDISH

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE DITTON

In one life, he was Edward Langley; in the other, he was Stewart McWatt. . . . Together, they had committed the perfect murder

THIS IS THE STORY of a perfect murder. It was committed by Edward Langley and not even the fact that Edward Langley is sitting in the condemned cell of Wandsworth Prison, waiting for two more Sundays to pass before the end comes, can detract from the perfection of the crime he committed.

It is a disquieting story, for it sets one to speculating about murder, particularly about undetected murder, because the fact is that if his name had been John Smith, or Bill Jones, or anyone of a thousand other commonplace names, his would in all human probability have remained upon the list of unsolved crimes. But it is because his name is Edward Langley—and for no other reason—that he has an appointment with the hangman.

The genesis of the story is in June, 1944, at which time Edward Langley was living in a shabby block of one-room flats off Blomfield Road, Maida Vale, a frowzy part of West London where the sun of respectability was setting. He was twenty-four years of age, an accountant by profession. A poor physique had kept him out of the armed services.

We meet Edward Langley one evening as he sat drinking insipid wartime beer in the saloon bar of the Rose of Normandy, some three hundred yards from where he lived. His drinking companion, who lived in the same block, was a young Scottish electrical engineer. His name was Stewart McWatt.

These two, living under the same roof and being much of an age, were on friendly terms. McWatt, as had often emerged in conversation, was a lonely young man. He had no other friends in London and, except for a married sister living somewhere in South Africa, no close relatives.

When the pub closed, these two began to walk home together. Hardly had the pub door closed behind them when there came the terrifying roar of a flying bomb as the flame from its motor came into view. Its line of flight would send it directly over their heads. McWatt sprinted for a nearby air-raid shelter, which was quite empty. Langley, who was mildly a claustrophobe, leaped over a low wall and lay flat, face downward, on the lawn of a private house. As he did so, the flying bomb became silent and went into a steep dive, which ended on the roof of the air-raid shelter where McWatt had taken refuge.

When Edward Langley found him he was quite dead, without a mark of any kind on him. He had been killed instantly by the tremendous concussion. Some forty-odd people living in adjacent houses were also killed.

Until the moment when he found McWatt's body, Langley had never done anything criminal. But when, by the light of his electric torch, he saw his friend's wallet protruding from a breast pocket, he yielded to the temptation of stealing it. Perhaps "temptation" is the wrong word, for he knew that the wallet contained nothing worth stealing. Only the same evening McWatt had borrowed a couple of pounds until pay-day. It was a whim, an uncontrolled impulse, not a temptation in the ordinary sense of the word. But it was destined to have far-reaching effects upon Edward Langley's life.

In those hideous days there were too many unidentified bodies in London for one more to make any difference. When McWatt's had lain unclaimed in the mortuary for the recognized period of time, it was buried as just one more nameless victim of indiscriminate bombing.

In McWatt's wallet were all his identity papers, his ration cards, one pound in money and two or three private letters of no consequence. As yet, Langley had no purpose in mind, but he locked the wallet away with his own private papers. When he did not report the circumstances at once, it became out of the question to do so later without laying himself open to grave suspicions. So it was that Stewart McWatt vanished from the earth, leaving no trace. Perfunctory inquiries were set on foot by his employers, and that was that.

The ration book revealed that McWatt had been a registered customer at a big food shop in Willesden, where he worked. Langley yielded to the temptation of using it and thus availing himself of double rations. So, as Langley, he continued to buy his food in Kilburn, while, as McWatt, he shopped in Willesden. Since he was dealing with a big organization, the impersonation was absurdly easy. Everyone was too busy to question his identity. Already the original crime had led to another. It would lead to still more before the tale was told.

IN the latter part of 1945 Langley went to see a play at a theatre in the Strand. During the first act the fur wrap of a woman sitting in front of him slipped off her shoulders. Almost simultaneously there was a cascade of green fire as a collar of square-cut emeralds fell at Langley's feet. He let his own raincoat fall to the floor, then bent forward to retrieve it and at the same time steal the emerald collar.

Ostensibly going out for a smoke in the interval, Langley left the theatre with the gems in his pocket. At home a brief examination convinced him that he had stolen an extremely valuable piece of jewellery. This was confirmed three days later, when the insurance underwriters advertised that they would pay a reward of £2,000 for its return—with a hint of "no questions asked."

Now, it so happened that the firm of accountants for which Langley worked had once recovered some valuable property for a client by employing an unsavoury character named Henry Ounsell, a pawnbroker suspected of being a receiver of stolen property. Langley knew Ounsell by sight and knew that he lived in a small detached villa in Willesden, not far from the shop where McWatt had been registered.

OUNSELL opened the door to Langley and recognized him from having seen him in the office. Not much escaped Henry Ounsell's beady little eyes. After some verbal sparring and circumlocution, Langley produced the emerald collar. Every fence in London and the gem dealers in Amsterdam, Antwerp and elsewhere on the Continent, knew all about the loss of this valuable piece of jewellery. Ounsell recognized it at once by the description.

"I'll give you three 'undred quid for it," he said with well simulated indifference.

"And then, I s'pose you go off an' claim the two thousand quid and no questions asked. Is that it? Like hell! I can collect two thousand from the insurance underwriters, and without any risk."

"All right, all right!" said Ounsell with a grin. "Hold your shirt on. There's no harm in trying, is there? What d'you want for it?"

"Now you're talking," said Langley. "The way I figure it is that if the insurance underwriters are willing to pay two thousand pounds, it ought to be worth ten thousand at least. I'll take three thousand pounds.'

"Give you twenty-five 'undred!"

"All right, it's a deal," replied Langley, who realized the risks attached to the "no questions asked" offer. He left Ounsell's house with twenty-five hundred in one pound notes concealed in a brown paper bag.

Now that he was a capitalist in a small way, Langley's horizon began to widen. In the office he learned of several "good things" before the public got wind of them. It was not long before the twenty-five hundred had been turned, by judicious speculation, into £8,000.

Langley still had no definite purpose in mind, but with every day that passed he saw new and advantageous possibilities in the possession of two disparate identities. Vaguely nefarious plans were forming slowly. The train of thought set up persuaded Langley that another banking account, in the name of McWatt, might be useful, so he opened one at a busy branch bank in the East End.

In a mean street some four hundred yards distant from the bank, he rented two cheap

Langley let his coat drop. As he bent to retrieve it, his hand stretched out towards the emerald collar

rooms, accounting for his frequent absences by saying that he was a commercial traveller. Four or five days weekly he slept in Maida Vale and on the others in the East End under the name of Stewart McWatt.

There was the thought, too, that if the income tax people ever became too curious about the affairs of Edward Langley, it would be simple enough to transfer all liquid assets to Stewart McWatt. The converse, if the need arose, would be equally simple, and there was nothing to connect the two.

HENRY OUNSELL, in addition to being a pawnbroker and fence, had another and more respectable activity: he did valuations of jewellery for probate purposes. It was in connection with this latter activity that Langley came in touch with him from time to time.

It was Ounsell's habit to keep in touch with his "customers," so he nodded in a friendly fashion to Langley when visiting the latter's office. Once, when they were leaving the office together in the late afternoon, Ounsell broke the ice and invited Langley to come home with him for a drink.

Henry Ounsell's heel of Achilles was drink. He hated to drink alone, but feared to drink in public places, lest liquor should loosen his tongue and lead him into some indiscretion. So he did his drinking mostly alone at his small house in Hallgrove Gardens, Willesden.

Edward Langley accepted the invitation with alacrity. The idea of drinking at the other's expense appealed to him, and there was always the possibility that something useful might emerge from the contact.

"You and me must see more 'f each other, boy," said Henry Ounsell later that evening as, somewhat glassy-eyed, he escorted his guest to the front door and held at bay two ferocious alsatian dogs. "Mewtchilly advantageous, see what I mean?"

Langley endeared himself to Henry Ounsell by obtaining—through a wine merchant client of his firm—a case of very old Scotch whisky at a reasonable price. He further ingratiated himself by giving the other advance business information of a kind which was easily translatable into money.

As the months passed, the evenings spent drinking in Willesden became more frequent and the two men more intimate. Then one night Ounsell—who was old enough to have more sense—had a few more drinks than usual and became boastful. Angered by Langley's unconcealed disbelief, he opened his safe and showed the other a diamond necklace, a photograph of which had recently appeared in the press with a large reward offered for its return.

On Ounsell's part, this was a grave mistake. Indeed, as things turned out, it was a fatal mistake, for Langley's cupidity had been aroused by the sight of valuable jewellery and

big stacks of currency, presumably the proceeds of illicit transactions on which no income tax had been paid.

It was at around this time that, his imagination fired by the possibilities, Langley began to widen the gulf between his dual identities until he schooled himself to think of Edward Langley and Stewart McWatt as separate and distinct personalities. For example, Stewart McWatt bought a small car, which he garaged in the East End. It was never driven by Edward Langley, whose salary was too small to run a car. When Stewart McWatt awakened in the East End, he did not confuse himself with Edward Langley, and the discipline thus imposed made the illusion of a twin identity most convincing. Let us, therefore, think of these two men as having entirely individual existences.

In the cold brain of Edward Langley, whose greed would not let him forget the contents of the safe, Henry Ounsell had already been condemned to death. The question was merely how the sentence was to be carried out. So he set to work to plan the perfect murder.

OUNSELL, by the nature of his calling, was a man without friends, for implicit in friendship is trust, and he trusted nobody. Langley, except for occasional furtive people who came in the night, was almost the only visitor to Ounsell's little house. The neighbours knew him well by sight. When he saw them mowing the lawn, trimming the hedge or at some other homely task, he made a point of stopping and chatting with them. He carried a huge silver cigarette case which held fifty cigarettes. Having once seen it, nobody could forget it, but to make doubly sure, there was engraved on the inside—clearly visible when the case was offered—the legend TO EDWARD LANGLEY WITH MABEL'S LOVE.

That Mabel was nonexistent was unimportant. All that mattered was that anyone to whom the case had been proffered should remember it and the engraved legend.

Two or three evenings weekly Langley was a visitor at Henry Ounsell's house. They drank until about eight o'clock, when they ate a cold meal left by Ounsell's housekeeper, or something like a stew, easily warmed. Then they drank some more.

On the evening which was destined to be his last on earth, Henry Ounsell had an appointment with a thief. Langley knew what they were going to discuss, but was not present at the conversation. Thieves dislike to talk in front of witnesses.

When the two others disappeared into the room which Ounsell liked to call his study, Langley went out into the street to chat with a neighbour who was taking his dog for a walk. Later the neighbour would be able to testify with certainty that he had seen Edward Langley enter Ounsell's house at a stated time.

Back in the living-room of the house, Langley poured himself a stiff whisky and, taking from his pocket a vial of colourless liquid, emptied it into the whisky decanter. Ounsell, who never drank before bargaining with a thief, would waste no time helping himself to a drink when the bargaining was done, and protocol would demand that he offer one to the thief also.

This is precisely what happened. Ounsell poured out a large whisky for himself and a smaller one for the thief.

"I'll play these," said Langley, who still nursed a glass of whisky taken from the decanter before it was doctored.

Presently, some fifteen minutes after having swallowed his first drink, the thief yawned.

"Bit stuffy in here," said Ounsell thickly. "Let's open the window." It was the last thing he ever said.

When the others were quite unconscious, Langley set about his tasks with cold deliberation. It was a Saturday evening. The woman who looked after Ounsell did not come on Sundays, so there was no hurry.

As he listened his face went white and his eyes rounded in terror. "It isn't true," he said. "It isn't true"

It was no coincidence that the thief was of roughly the same age and build as Edward Langley. It required some fifteen minutes to change clothes with him, to destroy his papers and put into his pocket the identity papers and cigarette case belonging to Edward Langley. Since all the evidence would point to the fact that Edward Langley had perished in the house, nobody would have any incentive to prove the contrary. Likewise, when Edward Langley failed to show up where he lived and worked, the presumption of his death, already strong, would be strengthened.

The two alsatians, which now accepted Langley, sat and watched while he fumbled in Ounsell's pockets for the safe key and opened the safe. Most of the space was taken by bundles of currency in small denominations. There was not time to count it, but at a rough estimate there was between £15,000 and £20,000. In a cigar box were precious stones which had been ripped out of their settings. These, presumably, were "hot" and would fetch only a fractional part of their value. But even so, they represented a fortune.

Closing and relocking the safe, Langley put the key back in Ounsell's pocket. Nobody need ever know that there had been a robbery. The loot just filled a medium-sized suitcase.

IN the basement of the house Henry Ounsell had stored a vast amount of odds and ends, mostly unredeemed pledges of small value. With them were a dozen crates of toys and other highly inflammable articles. These were immediately underneath the room in which Ounsell and the thief lay in their drugged sleep.

Taking a small pile of wood shavings, Langley went into the basement storeroom where the crates of toys were kept. With the shavings, some tinder-dry furniture and a bottle of cleaning fluid, a brisk fire was soon blazing. An electric fan, turned on full blast, ensured that it would quickly spread. It was time to go.

Taking the suitcase, Edward Langley left the house hurriedly by the rear exit, which led on to a narrow lane between high walls. He had to take the risk of meeting someone who knew him, but there was nobody about.

In a street some two hundred yards distant Stewart McWatt's car was parked, and as he put the heavy suitcase on the rear seat and started the engine, Edward Langley, for all practical purposes, ceased to exist. His old haunts, his home, his office, would never see him again and, if the fire proved as effective as he hoped, there would not even be a mystery. There might be a query as to why Henry Ounsell and the thief had not smelled smoke and given the alarm. But that would soon be answered, for Edward Langley had allowed the neighbours to learn that he and Henry Ounsell were heavy drinkers. It would be assumed that they had been overcome by smoke while in a drunken stupor.

Stewart McWatt drove at a leisurely pace down to the East End and shortly after midnight brewed himself a pot of tea, which he drank while studying the road maps of France and Italy. As his neighbours knew, Stewart McWatt planned a Continental motoring holiday.

Some four days later, a coroner's jury, called to inquire into the deaths of Henry Ounsell and Edward Langley, brought in a verdict of accidental death. A lawyer representing a fire insurance company established to the great satisfaction of his principals that highly inflammable goods had been stored in the basement, thus invalidating the policy.

That was that. There was no mystery, no suspicion and, it followed, no further investigation, because there was no least suggestion that a crime of any kind had been committed.

Edward Langley had committed the perfect murder and it now remained for Stewart McWatt to live comfortably on its proceeds. It was in holiday mood that, three days after the inquest, he drove to Dover, put his car upon the Channel ferry and drove southward from Calais. He paused in Paris to pick up some cheap francs, for which he had made an illegal sterling payment in London, and went on towards Fontainebleau and to the River Yonne, which leads into Burgundy.

THERE were still risks, of course, but time and prudence would minimize these. The first and obvious risk was that of running into someone who had known Edward Langley. But Langley had long hair, whereas Stewart McWatt—who had finally left his East End lodgings—would return to England with hair cut very short.

There were not yet enough people who knew Stewart McWatt to confound anyone who suspected him of being Edward Langley. There would be, of course, but in the meanwhile he had to guard against an unpredictable encounter which might upset everything. It would be some while before Stewart McWatt's antecedents would bear much investigation.

If it should ever come to the ears of the police that Edward Langley was still alive, three questions would be asked: (1) Who was the person whose body had been found that night with Henry Ounsell? (2) Why, since Edward Langley was known to have been in the house earlier, had he not come forward at the inquest? (3) Where had he been since and, particularly, why?

Over a bottle of excellent Macon wine, Stewart McWatt decided that even if by some remote mischance he should be identified as Edward Langley and questioned, there was still no great danger. He would say that he had feared to come forward—just that and nothing more. The onus of proof would lie on the accusers, and a good lawyer would soon make these accusations look foolish. It would be unpleasant, of course, but no more and, after all, one could not expect to commit the perfect murder without some slight risk of annoyance.

When he reached the Riviera, McWatt went to

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The sun and the sand had defeated my SAHARA TREK: the car was stranded and now I was alone. There was one thing left to do . . .

I write my last letter – to my wife

by RALPH SLEIGH

PETER JOPLING AND I were in a desperate situation. Not only were we lost somewhere in the heart of the Sahara Desert, but Peter was seriously ill. Almost three days before—on December 4, 1950—we had set out from Algiers in a Wolseley Six-Eighty car in an attempt to make a record-breaking drive across the Sahara from Algiers to Kano. Outside the little outpost fort of In Guezzam we had mistaken the route. Following wheel tracks in the sand in the belief that they would lead us to the next town, we had driven widely off course and got lost.

To make matters worse, Peter had gone down with a severe bout of malaria, from which he had suffered during the war. He had high fever, and was delirious. My own condition was far from good. I had now been awake for nearly three days and three nights, and during the last night and day I had been subjected to an almost impossible strain. I couldn't say that I felt tired now; I seemed to have gone beyond that stage. It was more of a feeling of utter weariness that I had. I started thinking about what would happen if I, also, became ill.

I knew now that we were so far off the route, perhaps more than two hundred miles, that it might be a week before we were found. I dared not think what could happen in that case. As far as I could see we had one chance, and one chance only: I must turn round and retrace my own tracks back to In Guezzam. There was not a moment to lose if Peter was to survive.

As I started off, it must have been about two in the afternoon. The sun was still high in that cloudless sky and would glare down on the parched and burning earth for another two hours yet. Strangely, I welcomed it; at least it was daylight.

The oil gauge, I noticed suddenly, was dropping back and we were losing oil pressure very quickly. Within a few minutes the reading was zero. Here was trouble in a big way. We undoubtedly had an oil leak, but how quickly the sump was draining I couldn't tell: There was only one way to find out: I must refill with oil, then drive on and see how long a full sump

Sleigh and his wife (right) with Mr. and Mrs. Jopling. When his journey ended in disaster, Sleigh said: "I shall go back—I mean to break that record"

lasted. Having filled up to the top level, I slammed the bonnet down, jumped into the seat and started off.

For the next half hour, we were tearing along, never running smoothly for a second, always being jolted and thrown about, crashing along that track. A track which was, to me, the most hated place on earth. A track which had led to nowhere, and had been the cause of all our failure.

As I glanced at the instruments I saw the oil gauge once again fall to zero. We had covered eighteen miles. We had two gallons of oil left and it was no use filling up again until the leak had been mended.

Peter was quiet; he just lolled in the seat looking half asleep.

Over to our right the ground gradually sloped down into a shallow valley, and as I looked I saw something that filled me with hope. Sprawled out in the valley was a Tuareg camp. It was only small, a few shelters made of branches pulled from the trees. There were camels, goats and donkeys roaming round and, under the trees, people sitting in little groups. They were getting to their feet now and making their way up to us.

Six of them came, led by a tall, elderly man. As they approached, they raised their hands in a greeting which I acknowledged. They laughed and chattered and were obviously very interested in us and our car. What a relief it was to meet them!

Ali, I gathered, was the name of the elderly man who was the head of this nomad Tuareg family. They were friendly and seemed to sense that we were in trouble.

Camel's Milk Slaked Thirst

Ali gave some instructions to one of the others, who rushed away and returned leading a camel. Ali pointed to the camel and made signs as if milking a cow, cupped his hands and pretended to drink.

A pot of foaming warm milk was produced with amazing speed. Very gingerly I raised it to my lips and tasted it; I had imagined that it would be strong and rank, but it tasted very good, similar to fresh cow's milk. I drank about a pint at one go. I took the remainder round to Peter who finished it off.

The Tuaregs began to wander back to their flimsy huts. Soon they had all gone except Ali and one other, whom I judged to be his son. I now set to work to repair the oil leak.

To protect the sump, a strong metal plate had been bolted under it. My first glance showed that the heads of the holding bolts had been battered out of shape. There were two, and the only hope of shifting them was with a hammer and punch. At every knock a shower of sand and dirt fell on to my face.

At last I managed to force off the shield, to find that the leak came from the drain plug which had worked loose. What a relief it was! Just a couple of turns with a spanner and our trouble was fixed. There was no hope of bolting the protecting shield back so I wired it as nearly into place as I could.

Weird Singing Of Tuaregs

By now the sun was sinking fast. I decided that as it would be dark very soon it would be stupid to go on. We would stay where we were that night, rest, and then set off at dawn.

Ali and his son had left and now we were on our own. From the camp I could hear the Tuaregs singing—a weird, tuneless sound that seemed to be taken up first at one camp fire and then at another. There was much shouting, men calling and women answering, and all the time the noise of the animals.

With Peter beside me in the car, eventually I dozed off to sleep.

It was light when I opened my eyes. I remember stretching myself, trying to get some circulation back into my frozen limbs. It was

Sleigh in the desert. When his car was trapped in the sand, he prepared to tie himself up with rope: if he grew delirious, his life would depend on beating the impulse to walk out to safety

then that it struck me with a jolt—I had the whole of the front seat to myself. I sprang out of the car and scanned the desert in all directions. There was no sign of Peter. What had happened to him I dared not think; he must have wandered off in his delirium. His blanket and coat were left in the car, so all he could have on would be his jacket. With his fever, he might catch pneumonia; I had to find him quickly and I needed help.

I dashed to the Tuareg camp. It was no good saying anything, so I beckoned to Ali and some of his men to follow me to the car. I threw open the door and indicated to them that it was empty. I picked up Peter's overcoat and showed it, made some footmarks in the sand and then acted as if I was tracking them.

Ali's son quickly understood the situation. He went about twenty yards away from the car and then began to walk round it, studying every footprint as he came to it.

Suddenly he beckoned everyone towards him; he faced them with both arms outstretched. There were eight men in all; these our desert scout fanned out, four on each side of him. I followed behind.

Slowly, the small party of searchers moved forward; we were about half a mile from the car now. From the tracker on the right wing of the line came an excited shout; he waved a man's jacket. It had been lodged on a scrub bush.

The searchers closed in, making this bush the centre of the line. After a further quarter of a mile we came across Peter's shirt, torn by the thorns on which it hung.

The farther we went, the more worried I became. Could Peter have survived this ordeal? If he had, what state would he be in when we got to him? The finding of his clothes indicated that he must be in a burning fever and was evidently discarding them to get cool.

I came upon a large rock. From the top of this I could get a good view of the country ahead. Well over to the left, under a dead tree, I saw Peter. He was just standing there with his back towards us. I shouted to the others and ran as fast as I could towards him. Stopping a few yards away from him, I stared aghast.

He stood there naked to the waist, looking up to the glaring sun as it climbed into the sky. From his head down to the top of his trousers, his whole body was bleeding. It was what a man's body would look like if he had been dragged for miles through brambles. The four-day growth of beard on his face, and the hair on his head were caked with sand. One bare foot was cut and scratched.

Ali and the others stood with a look of amazement in their eyes. No one spoke a word.

"Hello Peter, it's time we were on our way now," I said, as I took his arm gently. "Let's go back to the car so that I can get you food and a drink." Turning to my Tuareg friends I got two of the strongest to join hands, forming a seat, and then went through the motion of lifting Peter and placing him on it. In a few moments Peter was comfortably seated, many willing hands holding him firmly yet gently. In this way we made off back to the car.

It must have been about nine o'clock in the morning and the sun was just starting to warm things up. There lay before me the rest of that heart-breaking drive back to In Guezzam.

I calculated that we were about 170 miles away. It was obvious that Peter was not in a fit state to make the journey. I would have to

leave him with the Arabs. By sign language I made Ali understand my plan.

Ali slowly moved his head up and down to signify that he understood. As if everything had already been arranged, an elderly woman came forward, took Peter by the arm and led him down towards the camp.

Alone now, I set off once again. For the first twenty miles I forced the car through thick vegetation. The day, I could feel, was going to be hot indeed—one of those days when the heat of the sun burns the very skin off your body. Emerging from the vegetation I came out on to sandy, rocky country. The sand was very loose and if I became stuck in it, my chances of getting out alone would be remote.

Like a madman I drove, turning and twisting, dodging jagged rocks and patches of sand. What fantastic driving it was! I was sitting close up, leaning forward over the wheel, straining my eyes to pick out a route ahead.

Gaping Gash Across Tyre

I drove as fast as I could, changing down at the slightest sign of sticking, the sweat pouring off my face and body, thrown first one way and then the other, and all the time the interior of the car was a cloud of blinding dust.

There was a bang like the shot from a gun. The front of the car slewed round and then, bump—bump—bump. I got out to view the damage. The nearside front tyre was flat: across the tread was a gaping gash.

By the time I had got the spare wheel on, I was feeling very weak, with every muscle in my body aching and protesting. I drove on. Never before have I known such heat.

I emerged on to a barren plateau. The softness of the ground here was frightening, and I found that I was soon ploughing along in third gear, then second, for mile after mile. Looking back I could see that the car was leaving two deep ruts behind, and I knew that the struggle could not last.

With a sickening despair, I felt the car stick, every wheel held fast by the fine, powdery sand. It sank so low that even the rear axle and petrol tank were partly covered.

I jumped out almost in a daze now, and the sun struck my bare flesh like the flame of a blowlamp. It was just noon and the sun was right overhead. Falling on my knees I scraped with my hands at the sand under the running-board. In a desperate frenzy I tore it away, cursing as it fell back into the little trench I was trying to form.

At last there was enough space between the car and the ground to enable me to roll under. There I lay, exhausted and panting for breath, pouring sweat.

Death No Longer Mattered

I had plenty of time to think. For the past four days and four nights I had struggled on, always with a little hope. Now there was no hope; this was the end. Strangely enough, it didn't seem to matter much; nothing seemed to matter except to rest my worn-out body.

From the back of the car I got out my briefcase; I found paper and pen and I wrote to my wife. Briefly I explained what had happened, where Peter was, and how he could be reached. This note I fixed to the windscreen of the car. How long would it be before I was found? I guessed that after our non-arrival at Kano, two or three days would be allowed before any action was taken.

Transport would then be sent out along the main route between In Guezzam and Agades; this might take a further two days. Finding no sign of us on the route, they would then trace our tracks. It might be another day before they reached us. Six days from now a rescue party might arrive.

Was I equipped to last out for those six days? I was well off for water; there was a Jerrican of

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Shouting to the Arab trackers, Sleigh rushed forward. Ahead, standing motionless under a dead tree, was Jopling; he was naked to the waist, his body was bleeding and he gazed at the glaring sun

First Loves

by ***GEOFF LUCY***

ILLUSTRATED BY ZELINSKI

Beautiful Marie-Louise! She was everything in the world to Joe . . . till Belinda came to the fair

UNTIL BELINDA JOINED the fair, Marie-Louise had been Joe's only love. Marie-Louise was the steam engine that drove Ma Chisholm's roundabout. All Joe's love was needed to keep her going; nobody, said Ma Chisholm, had looked after Marie-Louise so well since she had been built sixty years ago by a Frenchman in a German workshop in the Black Forest.

Marie-Louise was beautiful in Joe's eyes. But even she could not compete with Belinda, who was nineteen and slender and intensely alive, with thick black hair from her Spanish mother and clear grey eyes from her Irish father.

Belinda came knocking at the door of Ma Chisholm's shabby caravan one morning in the late summer. Ma was stirring a cup of herb tea for her rheumatism; she could tell that the weather was going to break soon.

"Well, what is it?" asked the old woman shortly. She was not looking forward to another day spent clambering about taking sixpences.

"I want a job," said Belinda. "The fat man in the big van said you need some extra help because—" the grey eyes twinkled "—because of your twinges."

Ma Chisholm said nothing. The fat man in the big van? That was The Boss—the lessee, who ran the dodgems and supervised the smaller people. If he said she needed help, she needed help. But she didn't want this girl. Too pretty. And where had she come from, anyway?

"I've come from Berry's Fair," said Belinda, as if she had read the old woman's thoughts. Ma Chisholm, stirring the tea, remembered that the two fairs had passed on the road a few days ago; they were working the same string of West Country seaside towns. Well, at any rate, she was in the business. But why had she left Berry's?

"Trouble with the roller-coaster boss," added Belinda laconically.

No wonder, thought Ma Chisholm. And there'll be trouble here too if she stays. Perhaps she'll even make trouble with Joe. But if The Boss thought she needed help. . . .

"Joe!" she shouted without moving from the edge of the bunk. Joe came from under the bonnet of a diesel truck drawn up next to the van. When he saw Belinda he tried to wipe some of the grease from his face, and Ma Chisholm noticed uneasily that he was blushing.

"Joe, this girl will take the money today," she said. Suddenly, fiercely, she turned to the girl. "And no monkey business, mind."

Joe blushed deeper and Belinda shrugged, saying nothing. But as they walked through the lane of deserted sideshows and stalls he could feel her eyes glancing sideways at him.

"Been working here long?" she asked.

"Long as I remember," said Joe.

"Born in the fair?"

"Yes."

There was silence again, and then the girl laughed and said: "Well, go on. Tell me all about yourself."

"My father and mother were with the boss—they had the rifle range," he said, finding his tongue. "When they died he kept me on because I'd nowhere to go. I began to look after the machines—he said I'd got the knack. Then Ma Chisholm's old man left her and she took me on to keep Marie-Louise going."

"Marie-Louise? Who's she?"

"I'll show you," said Joe proudly. He led her to the old roundabout with its green and white striped canvas roof and ornate lettering round the top: THE PRIDE OF THE WEST COUNTRY. CHISHOLM'S GRAND GOLDEN GALLOPING HORSES. He helped her on to the platform and squeezed between the battered horses to the circular dais in the centre, and pointed down at Marie-Louise, already hissing gently like a kettle on the hob.

"She drives the whole thing—roundabout, dynamo for the lights, and the organ," he told her eagerly. "There used to be a little donkey engine for the organ but it blew up, so I put in this shaft and those gears—I found them in a junk yard—and made Marie-Louise drive the lot. Only two or three left in the country now—everybody else has gone in for diesel generators and panatropes, but Ma can't afford it, and anyway Marie-Louise works fine. Look, see how sweetly she runs."

Indeed the little engine did run sweetly, and Belinda smiled at his sudden animation.

THEN he showed her the steam organ, gay even in the daylight with coloured glass, brightly painted wooden statues, polished cymbals and whitened drums.

"Watch out," he said. "I'll turn it on for a moment." He moved a lever and threaded the paper, the slotted folding card that worked the organ like a pianola roll, into the keybox.

At once, the organ blared into monstrous noise, the cymbals clashed, the drums rattled and bumped.

Joe opened the keybox again. "You'll have plenty of time to listen to that if you stay here with us," he said, shutting off the steam. And then, as he talked to her, he realized he was telling her things—things about himself—he had told nobody else. She swung on to one of the wooden horses, resting her hands on its head, and listened; she seemed to be really interested, Joe remembered afterwards with something like wonder.

She kept on being interested, and Joe fell easily and blissfully in love, and Marie-Louise felt the lack of attention and complained wheezily at every thrust of her aged pistons. Never before had he known that sort of happiness; all the fairground girls he had met up to now had lost interest in him when they discovered that he had no smart repartee and

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As he ta

to the girl, Joe realized he was telling her things about himself that he had told no one else. She seemed to be really interested

One of Tomlinson's chores is testing the safety of the wooden bridge at Grindsbrook, and stopping walkers from carving on it

Sensible dress is essential for rambling. Tomlinson once found two girls wandering the moors in light summer clothing—on a cold February day

The parkland host teaches country manners

by JACK ATACK

Peak District National Park belongs to the people, and some of them act as if they own the place. Tom Tomlinson is there to see fair play for town and country

PATROLLING A HILLSIDE near Hayfield, Derbyshire, recently, Tom Tomlinson thought he could see signs of litter in the distance. He trained his binoculars across the valley and spotted a hut made of branches, the remains of a fire and a heap of paper and tin cans. Tomlinson approached the site from behind and surprised two teenage boys asleep in the den.

He explained to the boys that although they were on access land in one of Britain's eight national parks, camping was not allowed and, since they had committed an offence, he would have to take them to the police station at Hayfield. There a constable gave them a stern lecture. As they walked away, Tomlinson turned to one of the boys.

"Had you planned to spend the weekend here?" he asked. The boy nodded. "I know a farmer who allows campers to sleep in one of his fields," Tomlinson said.

He helped them to load their sleeping bags and rucksacks into his Land-Rover, and drove to a farm about a mile away. There the boys built another camp.

"They had learned their lesson and I hoped that they would spread news of the permitted camping site to their friends," Tomlinson says. "The boys had not set out to cause damage. But like so many townsfolk, they just didn't know how to behave in the country."

As chief warden of the Peak District National Park in the North of England, Tomlinson has the job of introducing townsfolk to the country and its inhabitants, and country-dwellers to townspeople. "Many visitors go wild in the wide open spaces. They think they can do what they like in a national park."

Since the warden service started at Easter last year, a local member of the farmer's union has reported that damage has sharply decreased, and gamekeepers and landowners agree that walkers now stay closer to public footpaths. Park authorities have the power of prosecution but have only exercised it in one case—when a group of youths broke into a hunting cabin, slept there and chopped up the door for firewood.

At present, Tomlinson, a lithe, forty-seven year old with a winning smile and persuasive voice, is the only paid full-time National Park Warden in Great Britain. He is appointed by the Peak Park Planning Board, which, in turn, is appointed by five constituent authorities, the Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Cheshire and West Riding of Yorkshire County Councils and the Sheffield County Borough Council. As chief warden, Tomlinson is paid £600 a year and has a Land-Rover for patrolling.

Of 542 square miles of beautiful country that make up the Peak District National Park, he has authority over fourteen-and-a-half square miles of open country—consisting mainly of Kinder Scout, a high plateau of land which is open to the public. In addition, he keeps an eye on approaches to this area and public footpaths in the surrounding countryside.

In his twofold job of straightening out visitors' misconceptions and smoothing farmers' ruffled tempers, Tomlinson finds that trouble is often caused by sheer carelessness. In one case, a party of ramblers left a farm gate open and forty sheep which the farmer had penned up on Saturday afternoon were left free to wander. When the farmer arrived at his field on Monday morning he found that all his sheep had gone. "To add insult to injury," says Tomlinson, "a farmer is liable to prosecution if his sheep are found straying."

One rambler overturned a primus stove beside a haystack. When the farmer rushed to his bedroom window, he saw a tower of flames and a man running away across a field.

"The local brigade soon put the fire out, but nothing could extinguish the farmer's anger

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARTHUR WHITTINGTON

towards ramblers after that," says Tomlinson.

To prevent such damage, he patrols fifteen miles of the area daily on foot and covers the whole area in a twenty-two mile walk every fortnight. On weekends and public holidays he is joined by forty or fifty volunteer wardens. There are about two hundred part-time helpers from local clubs and organizations. Equipped with armbands and letters of authority, they work on a rota system.

When he catches people causing damage, Tomlinson reprimands them on the spot, takes their names and addresses and checks them with the local police. Often he is surprised by people's ignorance of the damage that they are causing. Walking along Fairbrook Naze one day, Tomlinson saw a group of schoolboys rolling huge boulders down the hillside. After he had spoken to them, one of the boys pointed out that there had been nothing in sight.

Killed By Flying Boulder

"I had to convince them that there might be people or sheep down there, hidden from view," he says. "To them it had been like playing a game of marbles and they hadn't thought of the possible dangers. In the past, sheep have been killed and farmers' sheds have been smashed that way. One person on the Snake side of Kinder is thought to have been killed by a boulder, possibly sent flying by some thoughtless person."

If damage is simple and straightforward, Tomlinson often finds a practical kind of punishment. Seeing a group of young boys rolling stones off a farmer's wall down a hill, he rushed to the spot, made himself known and organized them into a work crew In the afternoon heat he made them haul the fifteen-pound stones back up the hill and fit them into the wall.

Tomlinson has to use tact in handling high-spirited visitors, and when they clash with local landowners he often has to be peacemaker. But he does not always side with country-dwellers in disputes. When one farmer insisted that his fence had been pushed over by ramblers, Tomlinson's reply was prompt. "Nonsense!" he said. "Your own cattle have done that. I've seen them rubbing against the posts myself." In the end, the farmer agreed that ramblers did not do all the damage they were accused of.

Motor Cycling Hooligans

Occasionally Tomlinson's efforts to create goodwill between urban visitors and their rural hosts are thwarted by outright cases of hooliganism. Once, he was patrolling the north side of Mam Tor when he heard a tremendous din coming from one hillside. He found a party of motor-cyclists plunging up and down the footpaths. Using the hillside for a scramble, they were cutting up the paths, filling the air with exhaust smoke, and endangering walkers. "It is the sort of thoughtless behaviour that turns country people against *all* townsfolk," says Tomlinson.

One of the main features of the warden service is an information centre, located at The Old Nag's Head Inn, Edale, a crossroads for walkers. Here they can pick up maps and advice from Fred Heardman, an experienced walker who has lived in the district for more than thirty years.

Frequently Heardman, who often leads parties on to Kinder, plans "surprise" encounters with the warden to dramatize the routine lectures that Tomlinson gives groups which he meets on the spot. Besides these friendly lectures on the country code, Tomlinson carries the battle for park preservation into the cities and towns themselves; he lectures to schools, youth clubs and rambling associations.

His job calls for a knowledge of map-reading, compass work, first aid, geology, botany and local weather conditions. Tomlinson belongs to a ramblers' association, a footpaths preservation society and the Youth Hostels Association; he has his St. John Ambulance certificate and is a special constable. His equipment includes heavy walking boots, a parka for winter and a rucksack in which he keeps compass, maps, torch, first-aid kit, folding knife, a coil of rope and a pair of high-powered binoculars.

While keeping an eye open for anyone causing damage, Tomlinson also looks for people who may have become lost on the moors. On Kinder Scout storms blow up without warning and in such cases Tomlinson's knowledge of the area—before becoming a National Park Warden he was warden of a local youth hostel for eight years—often saves valuable time. Walking head down against a blinding snow-storm last May, he came upon two men crouched behind a large boulder. Without a compass, they had lost their bearings.

"Which is the best way down?" they shouted.

"With me," Tomlinson replied. He led them directly down the slopes to Edale village. When walkers are lost, Tomlinson takes them to the nearest centre. Otherwise, confused and exhausted, they are liable to lose themselves a second time if they are left to make their own way down the slopes.

Every year thousands of people crowd into the park from surrounding industrial areas—as many as five hundred may arrive on a busy day—and Tomlinson is often surprised by the naïve approach that many show towards walking. "They set off on rugged walks with thin tennis shoes, shorts and paper carrier bags," he says. "They think I'm pulling their legs when I warn them what they are in for."

Speechless With Fright

In the worst case that Tomlinson remembers, two young girls dressed in light clothes were found wandering the moors on a cold February day. Separated from a party of older girls, they had lost their way and were walking hand-in-hand in circles as dusk drew on. "One of them was crying bitterly and the other was speechless with fright," he says. "If they hadn't been found, they would have spent the night up there and probably died from exposure."

On patrol, Tomlinson often intercepts coach parties and other groups to ask their intentions and warn them of difficulties. Once he stopped a party of thirty who had started off with the impossible object of walking the twenty-two miles round Kinder Scout in four hours. The walkers were not properly equipped and rain was sweeping across the moors. "I asked them if they had a map and the leader proudly unfolded one from his guide book," Tomlinson says. "It marked only the main cities in the North. Out on those flat, featureless moors in the rain they would have been lost in no time. I led them on a modified walk—and got them back before dark."

Dug Sheep Out Of Snow

One of the greatest services the warden service rendered was in February this year when local farmers sent urgent appeals for help in digging out their sheep after a severe snow-storm. Tomlinson relayed the appeal by newspaper and radio and got in touch with all his voluntary wardens. Forty-five volunteers came on Saturday and over three hundred on Sunday. As they arrived, Tomlinson allocated them to farmers and hundreds of sheep were dug out of gullies, many of them still alive.

In the same storm, one farmer was blocked from the main road and for three weeks was not able to get out or to send his children to school. When Tomlinson heard of his plight, he rounded up twenty ramblers from the local Youth Hostel and led them to the snow-covered side road. They pitched into the snow at ten o'clock in the morning and connected the side road with the main road at five o'clock that afternoon. "Before that, the farmer had not been co-operative with ramblers," says Tomlinson. "Now he is glad to give them advice and help them in any way he can." THE END

Tomlinson (in braces) discusses a route outside The Old Nag's Head Inn at Edale. Also holding the map is Fred Heardman, an experienced walker

Visitors' carelessness often infuriates local farmers. Harold Johnson (left) asks Tomlinson for a Bank Holiday patrol by voluntary wardens

Boys cooling off in a stream where paddling is forbidden are warned off by the warden. He often finds punishments that fit the crimes

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WATCHDOG OF THE WEST

Continued from page 11

which are standing ready now, are strongest in the centre of the defensive sickle and thin out at its extremities.

In the north, Norway and Denmark, whose rôle in the grand strategy is to neutralize, by air and naval forces, the waters of the Denmark straits and the Baltic, provide a division each and a total of seventeen air bases. The Benelux countries—Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg—muster five divisions and twenty-eight bases. At the centre, in western Germany, fifteen divisions of U.S., British and French troops face the Soviet spearhead. In this area there are thirty-four air bases, and behind it, in France, are another forty-five bases and an additional division of land forces.

Farther south, Italy has nine divisions and provides twenty-one air bases; then the line swings south-east to the Balkans—Greece with its five divisions and five bases—and across to Turkey, which contributes twelve divisions and nine bases.

If that were all, if decision in modern warfare always went to, in Napoleon's phrase, the "big battalions," the forces of the western powers would not be worth the expense of our keeping them in the line. General Gruenther is often asked what the situation would be if the U.S.S.R. attacked in strength.

"History is full of illustrations," he answers, "where the weaker force has held off or defeated a much stronger enemy. We are now reaching the point where the aggressor would have to handle his forces with consummate skill. He could not afford to make any mistakes, even if he should attack with all the force at his command."

Chastening Shield

Gruenther is satisfied that he already has an air-ground shield which, if not yet strong enough to contain the enemy drive, would oblige him to concentrate prior to the attack and bring up massive reserves. In that case, Gruenther believes, the concentrating forces would be extremely vulnerable to the power of our atomic weapons.

The actual deployment of opposing forces in Europe leaves no doubt as to where that assault would be aimed, says Gruenther. It will come, if it comes at all, through Germany. The spearhead of the assault is "standing to," and has been in position for years. At the moment there are twenty-two Soviet Army divisions in the eastern zone of Germany, eighteen of which are mechanized. These are supported by a further sixty divisions stationed in the satellite countries.

The main object of the U.S.S.R. in a major war must be the defeat of the United States. In the west, the first step in such a plan would be the occupation of western Europe and the crushing of Britain. For, as Field-Marshal Montgomery, Deputy Supreme Allied Commander, pointed out lately, if we lost control of the Atlantic and could not deploy the power of the American continent, Europe must fall.

Plans Still Valid

The strategy thought indispensable for Europe's safety was conceived by the North Atlantic Council in 1951 and, implemented by SHAPE, has remained valid ever since. It was based on the fundamental fact that the military forces of NATO were not organized for aggression, but as a deterrent. Should those forces be attacked, the first strategical necessity would be to hold the enemy as far to the east as possible. This is what has come to be known as the "forward" policy. But if the strategical concept has not changed in the last four years, its possible applications have been radically modified by the march of events.

The enormous range of modern weapons—rockets, guided missiles and long range artillery using atomic warheads—has made defence in depth a necessity. In this case it means a defence which covers as much as possible of western Germany. That fact, and not so much the mobilization of twelve German divisions, is the real significance of Federal Germany's entry into the Atlantic alliance.

"The more our army-air shield is spread to the east," General Gruenther explains, "the greater will be our chance, not only of preserving the territories of the NATO nations and our vital Atlantic supply lines, but of countering the advance of the Soviet mechanized divisions and of winning the first and all important battle of jet aircraft."

The possibility of exploiting the forward strategy, then, is one of the reasons which makes Gruenther believe that in three or four years the allies will be able to hold and defeat an all-out attack. The other reason is the use of atomic arms to counter the overwhelming superiority of the U.S.S.R. in men and conventional weapons.

Atomic Advantage

Gruenther and his commanders are confident that NATO forces possess at the moment a significant advantage over the Soviet in atomic power and the means of delivering it.

But time, Gruenther is never tired of repeating, is not on our side in the "short run." The U.S.S.R. possesses its own atomic tactical arsenal and has made surprisingly rapid preparations for the atomic battlefield. There must be no slackening of our momentum now, while the West enjoys superiority, and before such superiority is cancelled out by increased Soviet effort.

The question of an all-out atomic war is one which must wait on time and events, and is something about which nobody can prophesy. "Hydrogen bombs," General Gruenther points out; "will hurt no one as long as they are not delivered." He believes that as long as European defence continues to be organized on the present lines the bombs won't be delivered.

Should war come, by plan or by miscalculation, the first object of the Western alliance will be to prevent the overrunning of its bases, the neutralization of its retaliatory power. While the armies hold the land flanks in the north, centre and south, the task of the NATO navies will be to keep the ocean approaches open and guarantee the supply of material and men to the essential ports. Britain, although only 450 miles from the Russian positions in Germany, is the western key to those approaches. These islands are also an essential tactical base for retaliation.

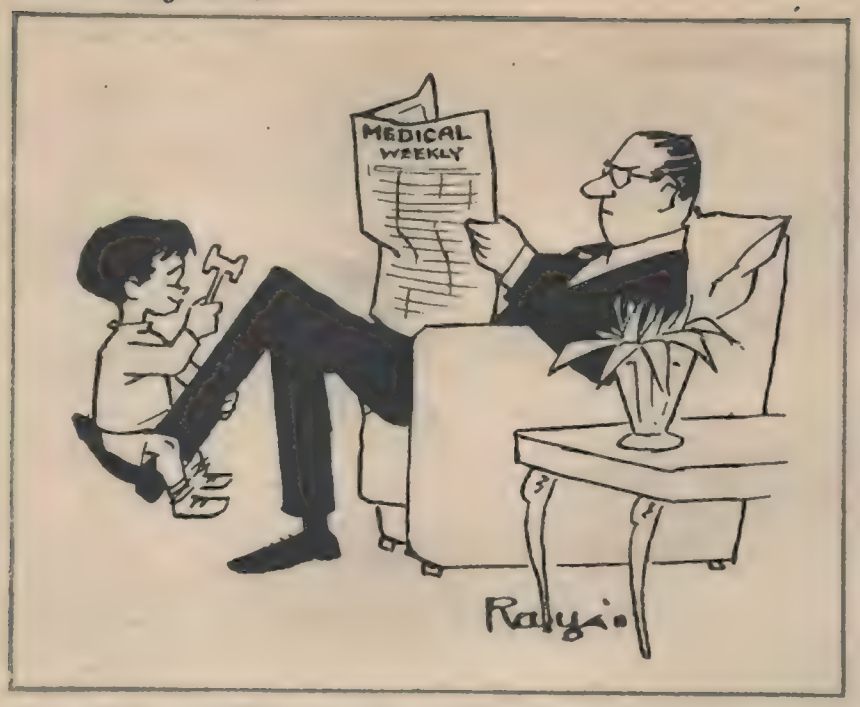
Striking Power

The rôle of the United Kingdom in the grand strategy will be a dual one. While still providing its contribution to the land forces on the Continent in the battle to pin the Communist advance as far to the east as possible—five British divisions stand in Western Germany now—Britain must hold off the Soviet air attack and, with its medium bombers and fighter bombers, strike at the bases from which such attack is being launched.

The survival of Britain is part of the forward strategy. If the active forces in the west, and the implications of their retaliatory power, can continually convince Soviet Army commanders that they cannot attack successfully without a massive build-up of men and armour behind their spearhead in Germany, General Gruenther believes that Europe will not be attacked, and if attacked, can and will be defended.

The "if" is a big one. The present advantage of atomic weapons in favour of the west will pass. The Soviet Union is known to be strengthening its aerial defences by the urgent building of more and more airfields and by the development of efficient long-range warning devices. Great offensive power will be needed to break this screen and such power, in the first place, can only come from the air arm. Owing to their present limited strength, the NATO air forces lack flexibility and a central control. Too much of it, it is thought, is deployed in direct support of the land forces, as in the last stages of the second World War, when the Allies were already masters of the air.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Basil Embry, who, from his headquarters in Fontainbleau, commands the air forces



of the Central European Command, believes that air power is one and indivisible, and that in a major war the western air forces cannot be exploited with maximum efficiency unless they are organized, and can act, as a free and independent arm. He believes that the United States Strategic Air Force, which is so organized, is the greatest single deterrent to a deliberate Soviet attack.

Sir Basil is satisfied that his men and aircraft are superior to their Russian counterparts. He believes that our scientists can solve the technical problems as they arise; the necessity, for instance, for extensive and vulnerable airfields in the forward areas would disappear with the development of "vertical lift" aircraft..

"If war comes," says Sir Basil, "its first and decisive battle will be in the air. And to win that battle air power must be predominant and allowed to take its own strategical and tactical dispositions."

The decision to set up an independent and unified air command would have to be a political one taken by the North Atlantic Council, which meets once a week in Paris.

And it is here that the western alliance, which is a group of sovereign nations, is at a serious disadvantage. A decision affecting military organization in the U.S.S.R. would be given by the Kremlin and put into practice immediately, without consulting an international cabinet or respecting time-wasting constitutional forms.

In NATO, time is lost and difficulties arise over questions other than those concerning national budgets: such questions as the plurality of weapons and equipment; the differences of staff procedures and military doctrine; the impact of purely national, as opposed to NATO, problems on the unity of defence. At present, owing to civil unrest, the French have 100,000 men in their North African possessions, a deployment which momentarily—but seriously—upsets the balance of European defence.

In France, again, there is a campaign to reduce the present period of conscription, which is eighteen months. A similar campaign has considerable backing in Britain, where a two-year period is in force. "Why," asked a Member of Parliament three months ago, "should our men serve two years when hardly any other country in NATO imposes the same burden?"

The Supreme Allied Commander in Europe cannot meddle in national affairs. As comment on the M.P.'s question, Gruenther can only point out that the average length of military service in the NATO countries is exactly half that imposed by the Soviet Union and its satellites.

Military alliances which necessitate a costly drain of men and money in peacetime are never popular, and the organization of European defence on a long-term basis has been variously criticized. Those countries nearest to what would be the forward theatres if war breaks out are naturally the most articulate. The French, whose land has been a battlefield in two world wars, fear that the old story will be repeated, and that the NATO bulwark is simply the Maginot Line under a more resounding name. They do not doubt the efficiency of the military commitments so much as the political structure which sustains them. Some Frenchmen think their national economy too weak to meet the demands of contributing to NATO. Others reject the idea outright.

But the main doubts spring from the intense French distrust of German militarism. It was this which made the French Assembly—which had proposed it—refuse the creation of the European Army.

The smaller nations—such as Belgium and the Netherlands—have bitter memories of "collective security" which provided none, but they accept the military alliance with realism. If they remember the Nazi parachutes over Rotterdam, they remember, equally, the battle of Arnhem and the Ardennes. "We don't want to be occupied or liberated again," is the Dutch attitude. "Any sacrifice is better than that."

German Attitude

The sacrifice is being accepted less willingly, curiously enough, in west Germany. The Germans of the Federal Republic are living well; there is a trade boom, and material success has tended to make people ignore their own and international politics. "Europe needs the Germans," wrote a prominent military critic in Bonn, "to resume their historic task of defending Europe's eastern frontiers." The task is made more difficult by the fact that the eastern frontiers are manned by fellow Germans—seven full-strength divisions, Russian-armed and Russian-trained.

The west German is not particularly, if at all, interested in what goes on in the Soviet side of his country. "We Germans in the west," said a journalist who went to Paris to cover the official entry of the Federal Republic into NATO, "will rearm and fight if we are given a purpose and responsibility. Like all Germans, we need a myth."

The purpose behind the western alliance, be added, might provide the myth.

Whatever the political and international difficulties encountered by NATO, General Gruenther is convinced that there is none at the general staff and the fighting level. "In my thirty-five years of service," he says, "I have been in many headquarters, but I have never had experience with a happier one than SHAPE."

General Alfred Maximilian Gruenther could, by birth and upbringing, be the most American of high-ranking officers. His father was German, his mother

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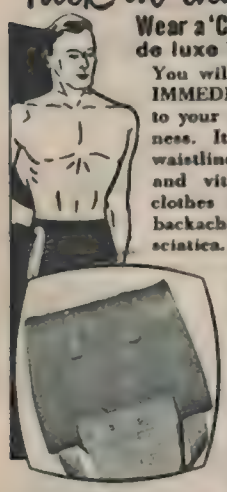

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southern Irish; he admits, not surprisingly, that until he was seventeen he implicitly believed "Godambritish" to be one word. Now, western statesmen and experienced staff officers acknowledge him to be the most "European" of American generals. "He has Irish charm combined with German thoroughness," said a SHAPE officer, trying to explain the mixture of ease and efficiency with which Gruenther runs his polyglot command.

Gruenther, who is an ex-artilleryman, might have acquired some of this sympathy for international company and aspirations during his time as chief of staff to General Mark Clark in the 15th Army Group during the Italian campaign of 1944. Then he worked with French, Italian, Indian, Polish and Commonwealth troops. It may be simply that he is interested in people and their problems. He is a colourful talker, but a better listener and an expert hand at asking questions.

He might—and is often obliged to—attend important conferences in three different countries in the course of twenty-four hours, and he makes sure that he is well briefed, not only on what is going to be on the agendas, but on the habits and personalities of the men he is going to meet. Then the "Gruenthergrams" are flicked round the offices of SHAPE. How does the French Assembly work? What really goes on in cricket? Has the Icelandic fishing dispute been settled?

Gruenther's staff has come to know—for Gruenther can get very angry indeed—that the answers to such questions may not begin with "I think . . ." or "It seems. . . ." He wants exact information, and he makes sure he gets it.

A year ago his public relations team was ordered to produce photographs and short biographies of every British Member of Parliament who had ever visited SHAPE. The explanation was apparent a few days later when, after lunch in the House of Commons, Gruenther strolled round the smoking-room and astonished individual members—some of them obscure back-benchers—by greeting them by name and asking about their constituencies.

Such seeming omniscience has always been peculiar to great commanders; the difference is that, with Gruenther, the interest is genuine. There is a board in the ante-room of his office which lists the birthdays of his many friends. He is kept informed of all social details in SHAPE: of officers and other ranks who marry, or are sick, or have additions to their families.

It is attention such as this, allied to his driving energy, which has added affection to the purely professional admiration of the four hundred officers who work with or for Gruenther. SHAPE works because the man at its head passionately believes in it. "When the general leaves his office," said an Italian officer, "the temperature of the place drops. It isn't because the 'boss' has left; it's as if the stimulation of a shot in the arm was wearing off."

As Supreme Commander, Europe, General Gruenther must meet the heads of state of all the member nations of NATO. This necessity, in another personality, might have induced a stiff and formal attitude to protocol. It is otherwise with Gruenther. Last year, when he visited the Queen, Gruenther arrived at Buckingham Palace with a large cardboard box which, unloaded with difficulty from the car, was carried into the Palace by the Scots colonel attached to the general's personal staff. An hour later, the Queen, the Supreme Commander and the colonel were laughing at the antics of a mechanical spider. The mysterious box had contained American toys for Prince Charles and Princess Anne.

If Gruenther hustles his team, he has no mercy on himself. He works everywhere: in trains and cars, in the aircraft which carry him from one link to another of the four-thousand-mile chain of his commands. In an aircraft he will sometimes slip on an old sports coat as he dictates or goes through his files, but as a rule he is never seen in anything but uniform. When he does have to change it is with his usual rapid efficiency.

"The general," complains his chief public relations officer, "can get from uniform into full tail-coat regalia in exactly three minutes. It makes journeys with him rather a strain."

Playing His Hand

No strain is apparent in this fit, lean, bright-eyed man of fifty-six. Like most able, many-sided people he knows how to relax, and he relaxes whenever his job permits it. He is a family man—his two sons are serving in the U.S. Army—and likes to get home to his house near Paris to play a set of tennis, or listen to some of his library of classical recordings.

Gruenther still enjoys a session of bridge, and it is with a card player's expression that he sums up his view of the possibilities of European defence.

"We must," he says, "play this hand from strength."

The "new look" of Soviet policy, the Austrian Treaty, the disarmament talks, the "thaw" in East-West relations, the effort to neutralize Germany—all these, Gruenther concedes, must be examined and sounded by the politicians of the western alliance. But he insists that, until disarmament becomes a reality, the military machine of NATO must be kept running.

Gruenther is fond of quoting President Lincoln's reply to someone who asked how long his legs were. "Just long enough to reach the ground" was the answer. Western defence is perhaps not yet quite long enough to "reach the ground"; but Gruenther believes that its effort to become so is the only reason why peace has been preserved. THE END

SEA-WYF AND BISCUIT

Continued from page 15

chanted without a hint of emotion in his voice.

"We do not know any more," Bulldog said wearily.

"We have serious duty to perform. My honourable commander says 'Goodbye.'"

An order was given and a sailor knelt down to cast loose the float.

"We need water and food," Biscuit said.

"My commander regrets that he has nothing to spare. We are on special mission far from base."

"If you will not supply us, we are compelled to give ourselves up as your prisoners," Bulldog said.

There was a brief consultation. Then: "My commander regrets that he has no space for prisoners. He does not shoot non-combatants, but if you are not prepared to die honourably by your own hands he is prepared as a humane man to slit your boat open with a sword."

There was a stunned silence.

"What you say he suggests is murder," Bulldog broke out. "It is against every code of civilized nations."

"On the contrary, my commander is behaving strictly according to international law in leaving civilians unmolested."

SEA-WYF then spoke for the first time, quietly yet earnestly: "Your commander described himself as a humane man. I am sure he is. For the sake of common humanity I appeal to him not to turn away from unfortunates, leaving us to die from want. Whatever his religion, that would be a sin he must not place upon his conscience."

In her poor torn shift, her hands clasped, her dark eyes fearless but appealing, the girl waited for a reply.

When her words were translated to him, the commander slightly shrugged his shoulders.

Then Number Four spoke to him directly, in a language which he understood. The others, watching, saw him look at Number Four as if for the first time he had recognized that there was at least one human being in the float. As the speech went on he nodded once or twice. His sailors, who until then had kept their fingers on their triggers, lowered their weapons slightly. Their mask-like faces came to life.

Biscuit and Bulldog could understand nothing at all, but at least a word or two must have conveyed something to Sea-Wyf, for when Number Four pointed towards her saying something, she exclaimed: "No! No!" vehemently. She was not heeded. Number Four went on speaking while the commander listened attentively.

When Number Four at last came to an end the commander remained for some moments longer in the same attitude of attention, interestedly examining the one-legged man and his companions, particularly the woman.

Then he gave an order. The metal container, the empty demijohn and the biscuit tin were taken from the float and carried below. They were brought on deck again and put into the float. A sailor's white smock and a small parcel wrapped in oilcloth were handed to Sea-Wyf. Directly this had been done the float was cast adrift.

Biscuit came out of a trance of amazement. "Where is the nearest land?" he shouted.

The interpreter spread his hands. "There is land all round."

"How long to reach it?"

The submarine was already under way. The interpreter now stood alone upon the patch of deck. With his spectacled face and thin, straight figure he was like a schoolteacher who, by unkind magic, was being carried away from his class before he had instructed them.

"Empty your minds," he called across the water. "You must learn to eat time."

Within a few minutes the submarine was hull-down, then out of sight. The four on the float were once more alone in mid-ocean.

Everything except the smock, which Sea-Wyf had already put on, and the parcel, which had proved to contain a book, was laid out on the floorboards. The metal container and the demijohn were full of water. The biscuit tin steamed with a concoction of beans and fish. There was also a bag of hard tack. Altogether there were about four gallons of water and twenty-five pounds of food.

"What shall we fix on as a daily ration?" Biscuit asked.

"I'll work it out," Bulldog said. "We decided we might be two thousand miles from Africa. Say we average twenty miles a day. That means a hundred days. Four gallons is thirty-two pints. Just over a third of a pint of water a day for the four of us—a twelfth of a pint each."

The faces of the others grew increasingly solemn while this calculation was being made.

"A very small whisky," Biscuit murmured.

"And the food," Bulldog went on. "Twenty-five pounds—a quarter of a pound a day—one ounce each."

"We can't live on that," Biscuit said. "How do you suppose you are going to measure it out?"

Number Four interrupted. "I take charge of the stores and issue them," he said.

The two white men stared at him. For a moment surprise was stronger than any other emotion. Number Four's one virtue had been that he seemed to know his place. But now——

"Who the deuce asked your opinion?" Bulldog demanded.

"I did not give opinion. I said what I will do," Number Four answered calmly in his deep voice.

"What you would do?"

"Yes, with my food and water."

"*Your* food and water?"

"The commander gave it to me because of what I told him."

The amazement of Bulldog and Biscuit had rapidly changed to anger. That this creature who had done no paddling the night before should talk like this now was intolerable. Bulldog leaned forward to gather up the stores as a demonstration of who was in charge. Number Four, who had been squatting in his usual position in the stern, rose an inch or two upon his single leg as if it were a spring.

"Touch nothing," he said.

He was in the pose of a sprinter at the start of a race. His spread fingers were pressing on the floor boards and the muscles stood out upon his arms and shoulders. . . . The two white men hesitated, each one waiting for the other to act. Into Bulldog's mind came a picture of the two former occupants of the float wrestling together until they both went overboard.

"What did you say to the submarine commander?" he asked coldly.

"I told him——"

The eyes of Number Four flicked between the two men and then to the bow of the float. Instinctively glancing round, Biscuit saw Sea-Wyf looking at Number Four with an expression of desperate appeal. It was gone in a moment, and she said quietly: "Would you be satisfied if I took charge of the rations? I know what is necessary."

They agreed gladly. The strain was broken. . . .

THE float went well under the red sail. It would only go before the wind, but that was as good a direction as they knew—roughly north-eastward. And the sense of speed was stimulating.

Sea-Wyf gave them each as much of the bean stew as they could balance on two fingers. They made a joke of the smallness of the meal and at the system she had chosen, for she got least of all. But this, she said, was fair: each would be fed in proportion to his size. They were all doing their best to be amicable, but even that innocent remark made the two white men look with disapproval at the big chocolate-coloured hands of Number Four.

"Queer people, the Japs," Biscuit said after a while, "giving a book to starving castaways. What is it, Sea-Wyf?"

She took the parcel out of the sail pocket and unwrapped the covering of

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oilcloth. "I don't know," she said. "I know very few words in Japanese."

"That's clever enough. How did you come to learn even that?"

"We had a girl. . . . I have known one or two Japanese," she said. She paused, then held out the book to Number Four. "Can you tell me what it is?"

He took it, evidently trying to read her expression before he glanced at the book. "I speak a little. I went often to Japanese ports before the war and always I assisted my captains in matters of business. But I do not read it well." He thumbed doubtfully through the pages. "I think it is the old Japanese history, or the legends——"

"Why should he give her that?" Biscuit asked.

Number Four glanced at Sea-Wyf with inquiring, dog-like eyes. She answered for him. "I expect the commander wanted me—all of us—to understand his people better. The Japanese are anxious to be understood. But I wonder what this says?"

Inside the book she had found an envelope which contained a card with a few words written on it.

"I can guess that," Biscuit said. "'Read it carefully, dear boy. With love from Aunt Fanny.' The Honourable Commander was not above handing on a parting present. So perhaps it's not such a significant gesture after all."

THAT was their longest conversation. Talking dried their mouths and throats, and it was exhausting. They felt weak. As the sun climbed, they sank into an uncomfortable lassitude, feeling too lazy even to change position when they became cramped.

The float scudded over the endless swell, now deep in a trough, then climbing the slope of the sea, for a moment with a wide view from the crest, then down into another trough.

The four human beings, their feet touching, dozed. When they woke they were all thirsty. They looked at Sea-Wyf and she answered the unspoken question. It would be better, she said, to wait until sunset before having any water. Then it would have a more lasting effect.

They accepted her judgment without question. They did not even ask how much she would let them have at sunset. There was a curious relief in their predicament in feeling themselves so dependent on a woman.

Towards evening the wind fell away entirely and the little red sail flapped idly to and fro. Number Four stood up, balancing on his single leg, one hand resting lightly on the mast. He scanned the water all round, then announced that he was going to take a swim. Would one of them go in with him while the other two kept watch for sharks? When they came out, the watchers could bathe.

"Do as you like," Bulldog said.

"You don't want to swim?"

"Not now."

Number Four grinned. "Afraid of sharks?"

"Not more than anybody else. I'll bathe when I feel inclined."

"What about you, Biscuit?"

Biscuit felt himself reacting against being addressed like that by Number Four. But, having decided to take things easily, he merely shook his head in reply.

Number Four looked down at them and scowled.

"I will swim with you," Sea-Wyf said. She slipped off her smock and went over the side in her undergarment.

Number Four's face lit up with a smile as he watched her swim. Then he gave a spring and dived in.

His black head broke surface close beside her when she was about fifteen yards from the float. She said something to him. He appeared to question her and she spoke again, then turned back towards the float.

Biscuit and Bulldog looked at each other questioningly. . . .

A night, and then morning. Sea-Wyf said they could have one swallow each. She handed the water container first to Number Four, and as he held it to his lips the other two men watched his throat closely. They saw the muscles move several times.

"Stop!" Bulldog shouted.

"It was only one mouthful," Number Four answered, glaring. "It was one swallow—little bits of the same swallow."

Sea-Wyf took the container from Number Four's hands. "You know he did nothing wrong," she said. And when they did not express agreement, she added: "If I am to look after the stores, please do not quarrel over my suggestions."

There was a hint of appeal in her voice. Bulldog and Biscuit felt suddenly ashamed. "Naturally we will accept your judgment," Bulldog said.

Both he and Biscuit on that occasion took their ration at a single gulp—and regretted it. The effect was lost so soon. Sea-Wyf, on the other hand, swallowed hers very slowly. They watched her lips and cheeks moving while she caressed the liquid with her tongue, as a wine-taster does, then let it trickle gradually down her throat.

As they settled for the night, Bulldog felt in a state of nervous irritation. He was worried about Number Four. The mulatto was as powerful as the rest of them put together. And the girl who had taken charge of the stores was in some mysterious way in league with him, or at least sympathetic to him.

If it came to a fight, the least that could happen would be that they would all go overboard. In the water Number Four would easily outlast them. Then he could right the float and climb on board again. It would not be impossible to preserve the stores—the demijohn was again attached to the lifeline and the other stores could be similarly secured.

By a single violent action Number Four could have the woman to himself or the stores to himself.

It would be criminal folly to wait until he committed the crime. The right and logical thing to do was to act first. But how? If only, Bulldog thought, he could talk to the others, they could act together.

Probably there would have to be a long period of watching and waiting, remaining very much on the alert. . . .

By now it was dark except for the rag of a moon and the infinity of dancing stars. They slept.

Suddenly they were all upon their knees, gripping the lifeline and staring about them with frightened eyes. What had wakened them was a noise like silk being torn by hand, and it continued, louder every second.

The float rose to the crest of a swell, and they saw a black mass bearing down on them at speed. It was a ship without lights.

NUMBER FOUR heaved himself forward, grabbed a paddle and began to use it. Biscuit took the other. The approaching vessel looked like a warship, coming at great speed and straight at them. It seemed to climb up and up, growing in size.

Bulldog leaped to his feet, waved his arms and shouted. His voice was lost in the hiss of ripped water. The bow cut past them scarcely thirty yards away. A white explosion covered them, and the float tilted almost to its side. Biscuit got Bulldog by the ankles as he was going overboard.

They were conscious of a grey wall racing past them, followed by another explosion of spray. For some seconds there was complete confusion. Then the float gradually settled down, half full of water.

At first they thought that they were sinking and baled desperately with their hands. When they discovered that the float was almost as buoyant as ever and no less stable they paused for breath.

"Have we lost anything?" Bulldog asked.

"The food and water are safe," Sea-Wyf replied. She sat huddled in the bow, her arms full.

"There is a paddle missing," said Number Four.

They searched about them. "Which of you had it?" Bulldog asked.

Biscuit said: "I expect I did. It

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probably went overboard when I caught hold of you."

They peered about them. It was not quite dark because of the stars and because the eastern sky was already lightening. But they could see nothing on the water.

During the next half hour they stood up in turn—only one could safely stand at a time—and tried to see a little farther while the others continued to bale with their hands.

The sun elbowed itself up over the horizon, shimmering, blazing, impatient. One side of the swell glittered with colour, but for a little while the other slope remained in shadow so that the ocean was a patchwork varying from dazzling to dark.

"I see it!" the girl cried. "I see the paddle."

"Where?"

"In that direction. About"—she gave a sort of laugh—"about as far as you could hit a tennis ball with a racket." There was a youthful excitement in her face which they had not seen before.

"We can't get up-wind with one paddle," Bulldog said.

Like a seal, Number Four went over the side and swam in the direction in which the girl had pointed. His arms moved fast and rhythmically, his single foot weaved to and fro.

"He is swimming a long way," Biscuit said.

Number Four became hidden by the swell. Bulldog looked meaningly at Biscuit and slowly nodded his head. He reached for the pocket where the sail was stored.

"No!" the girl said.

"But why not set the sail now? There is a good breeze. We have got to hurry for our lives."

"No," Sea-Wyf repeated.

"He joined us without permission," Bulldog said vehemently. "He tried to usurp the stores. He's not one of us. He may do anything—this isn't a game of tennis. It's life or death." He reached past her where she sat with the stores in her arms and took the sail out of the pocket.

The girl's expression was now more scared than anything else, but she kept her dark eyes full on Bulldog's face. "For life or death, he is with us on this float," she said.

Bulldog began to hoist the sail.

The girl's voice was dangerously quiet. "If you do not lower the sail at once, I will throw all the stores overboard."

Bulldog glared at her. "You silly little fool. Do you think you are stronger than I am?"

"Yes," she said. "I am not afraid to die, and you are!" She unscrewed the stopper of the demijohn and stood up with the food in her arms.

His eyes wavered away. He lowered the sail. "What did you say to him so privately in the water last evening?" he asked, beaten and angry, trying to hurt.

For the first time she hesitated. "Among other things, what I have said to you. We are together on this float for life or death," she answered slowly.

Number Four swam to the float, thrusting the paddle before him like a lance. He slid over the side and crouched on the floor, dripping.

"Well done!" Sea-Wyf said warmly.

He did not answer her.

ALL four of them became greatly changed during the ten days which followed. This was due to thirst and hunger, their cramped quarters and the callous cruelty of the sun.

Sea-Wyf changed least in appearance. Her face, though it grew thinner, remained smooth. In the bow she had a degree of privacy while the sail was set, and she used it to launder her rough sailor's smock and thin, torn shift. But the men, their faces covered with hair, looked like the wildest savages.

Thirst was a far greater hardship than hunger. It was like a flame which burned more and more consumingly. Not only in their dreams but while they were awake they imagined themselves drinking. They moved their cracked lips and tried to work their desiccated throat muscles as if they were swallowing.

They welcomed the bean stew while it lasted because there was moisture in it. But the hard tack was a different matter. Bulldog and Biscuit could scarcely put it in their mouths. It absorbed at once the last traces of saliva. Thus when the stew was finished they began to starve, although they scarcely felt hungry at all.

Their cramped quarters accelerated the attrition. The almost complete lack of exercise had a bad effect upon their systems, while from sitting always in much the same positions they developed painful sores.

It was Sea-Wyf who, by example and suggestion, got them to follow as healthful a routine as possible. At sunrise every day they went over the side one or two at a time. They rarely swam more than a few strokes—they did not trust their strength—but they clung to the lifeline and let the water soak into their pores.

THERE was spiritual comfort in this as well as physical. For one thing it gave them a sense of privacy: it was the only time when their almost naked bodies were hidden from each other. Also it was the only time when they felt clean. They could wash out their mouths, and they would completely immerse themselves for as long as they could hold their breath. Biscuit said that it was like a rite of absolution.

After the morning bathe the men took turns to sail the float. Sea-Wyf emptied the hard tack into the sail pocket and soaked the canvas bag. They used to wear this like a pirate's cap, in turns, until it grew dry. They had nothing else to cover their heads, so the only other protection against sun-stroke was continually to damp their hair. This was almost a whole-time occupation, for it was extraordinary how quickly it got dry.

They now sailed by night as well as by day. Theoretically two of them were on watch together, but actually there was so little to do that one could doze while the other sailed and kept the look out. By a changing roster no two were consecutively paired.

More and more they were becoming dependent on Sea-Wyf. That she was the youngest of them made no difference. She gave them food and water and did what she could for their welfare. Her rarely spoken words were law. Whatever happened in their frightening situation, lost in a boundless, ever-moving ocean, her composure never changed.

They saw more ships. Once what must have been a whole convoy passed them. Had the float been ten or twenty miles farther south it would have been right in the path of the ships, but as it was the castaways only saw the patches of smoke. The ships went past hidden by the curve of the earth, and the people on the float felt more desolate and lonely than ever.

Another occasion was still more distressing. It was during the brief and brilliant sunset period when the highly coloured clouds which had brought no rain were camouflaging the sea with reflected reds and greens and purples. That must have been the reason why the float with its bright sail was not observed from the bridge, for the ship passed within a quarter of a mile.

She was a big freighter, carrying no flag, travelling at perhaps fifteen knots. They could not stand up because it was rough but they waved frantically and tried to shout. They saw nobody at all on deck until the cook appeared from his galley. He took off his tall white hat to mop his forehead, and a ray of light caught his bald head and made it shine.

He took a cigarette from behind his ear and for several minutes leaned over the rail, smoking. Then he threw the stub away and went back into the galley. The ship went on and was swallowed by the night.

A third occasion was nearly disastrous, for it caused a resurgence of the passions which were banked down but not far below the surface.

It was dawn. Bulldog and Number

Four were sharing the watch. It being Bulldog's half period of direct responsibility, Number Four had dozed off. They all dropped asleep now, quite suddenly, like old men in armchairs.

What wind there was had become fitful, puffing from different quarters, so Bulldog had lowered the sail. With nothing to do, he began to doze.

He was wakened by a sudden tilting of the float. His sense of responsibility made him sit up and look about him. He saw a single wave which must have just passed under the float and was travelling on over the oily surface, picked out by the horizontal shafts of light. Following the line of this wave he saw a ship. From her course she must certainly have passed close by, but she was now well beyond earshot. He saw a cloud of gulls about the stern, but no sailors who might notice if he waved.

He glanced at his companions. They were still asleep. He decided that it would be best to say and do nothing. Five minutes went by. He sat perfectly still, longing for the useless ship to go down over the horizon. He forced himself to look away from it.

Suddenly there was a squark, a high-pitched mewing sound, and Number Four sat up. "Birds!" he exclaimed. "That means land."

Land! They were all wide awake in a moment, peering eagerly. They saw the ship going away from them.

From the ship they turned to Bulldog. Number Four barked out, "You let her go. Why did you let her go?"

"I could not attract their attention," Bulldog said.

"Why didn't you call us? You let her go. You want to kill us, that's why you let her go."

"I tell you that they did not see——"

"What for you didn't call us? Eh? Come on!" Number Four kept thrusting out his lips, trying to moisten them with a white tongue.

"The ship has gone," Sea-Wyf said. "Let us accept that. Quarrelling will not help."

BOTH men fell silent, but there was still a sense of smouldering irritation. "Shall we bathe?" the girl suggested.

"Before we do that I would like to try for a fish," Biscuit said. "They should be hungriest in the morning. Can I have some hard tack crumbs?"

Sea-Wyf threw the crumbs overboard and the fish came swarming to the surface, making it boil. The paddles splashed down but killed no fish.

Then into the middle of the boiling mass a white bird dived. It came up with a half-pounder in its beak, and a second later rose laboriously into the air. It tried to swallow the fish while flying but the other birds were screeching all round it and it became entirely occupied in the effort to escape. Then the fish dropped, splashing into the sea only twenty yards from the float.

"Quick!" Biscuit said.

They paddled rapidly towards the fish, but before they could reach it another bird had come down like an arrow and snatched it up. This bird remained upon the water, and with a tremendous effort, wriggling its whole body, managed to get the fish down, all except the end of the tail. That done, it remained with wings and neck extended, its beak working in gasps.

Number Four's paddle came down with a crash and the bird was a mass of white feathers on the water.

All except Sea-Wyf let out the wild exultant cry of savages in a successful hunt. Their eyes were wild and their whiskered faces gloated. They tore the bird to pieces there and then. It was comparatively easy to swallow it because of the blood.

SEA-WYF refused to touch the bird. They offered her the fish, but she only shook her head. Her whole appearance had changed. Biscuit was shocked. He made some joke about their manners, thinking she was horrified by the way they crammed the raw flesh into their mouths. But her expression was not of horror. It was of despair. She seemed to be giving up as had so many in the lifeboats.

She sank lower and lower in her place, and she muttered to herself as they had seen people do before they lost their wits and drowned themselves.

Throughout the morning she remained in much the same state, only her lips moving now and then. The men watched her with increasing anxiety, fully realizing for the first time how much they depended on her. They looked at the ocean and at each other, fearing each other. They became overwhelmed by the hopelessness of their situation.

"Sea-Wyf," Biscuit whispered. "We need you."

It was as if she were sinking into a quicksand. Physically close though they were, they could not reach her to help her out. She would have to struggle out herself, and if she sank any lower that would be impossible. They watched her lips moving and wondered what she said.

Very gradually they saw the dark, despondent eyes become sure again, the expression firm and calm. At last she held out her hand for the fish. They gave her the battered thing and she ate it. Clearly it was a great effort for her to do this, but she chewed it slowly and swallowed it all. She was herself again. She asked them to wash themselves and the float.

Two hours before sunset Number Four said: "Let us have the water now."

Sea-Wyf shook her head with a slight smile, as a nurse refuses a patient, and Number Four acquiesced. Still more than the others he accepted whatever she said, obeying in an almost dog-like way.

After water had been mentioned they could not think of anything except its clean feel in their mouths. The taste of the bird's blood had become foul on their tongues and palates.

Sunset colours began to light the sky. The effect was unusual. Three-quarters of the heavens were clear, but in the south-west there was a hazy mass, not quite like cloud. This dark mass advanced towards the sun and slid in front of it.

"Now!" Bulldog exclaimed. "Let us

Have

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PRICES of SPRATT'S BONIO (Regd.) BISCUITS

We regret that the prices in the Advertisement for Spratt's "Bonio" Biscuits, as printed in the July 23rd issue of "John Bull" were incorrect. As consistently advertised the prices remain as follows:

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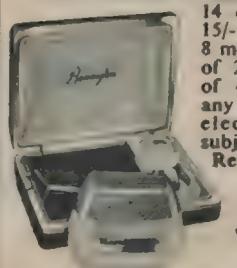

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"DISPRIN" has the power to pass more quickly from the stomach into the blood-stream to relieve pain. Yet its rapid pain-relieving action is actually *safer*.

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Take "Disprin" for headaches, colds and rheumatic pain. 26 tablets cost only 1/11, 50 tablets 3/2, 8 tablets in flat, handy pack, 8½d. From your chemist.

DISPRIN dissolves pain
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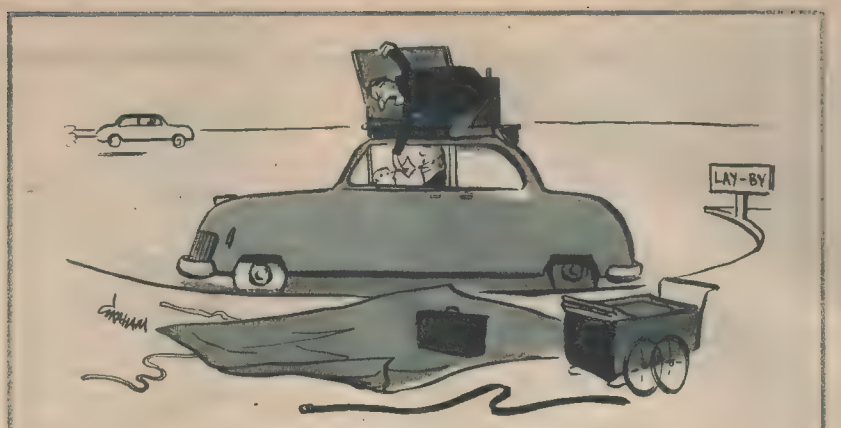

"One clean handkerchief!"

have water now." Again the girl shook her head.

"Why? That's as good as sunset." His sharp voice struck a chord in all of them—brittle with impatience, angry at restraint.

"Let us wait for the rain," the girl said quietly.

"It hasn't rained for a fortnight. Why should it ever rain?"

"It will tonight."

"In that case let us have some water now."

Again Sea-Wyf shook her head.

It was not dark. Directly the mass had swallowed up the sun, three-quarters of all the stars in heaven had flashed on like electric lights, burning brilliantly against the clear dark blue: And the mass itself effused a sort of light, violet and orange. There was an extraordinary tension in the air.

Looking intently at Sea-Wyf, as they all were doing, Biscuit suddenly felt that he knew why she refused. During the long days with very little conversation he had sometimes half-believed that he was developing a telepathic understanding of her thoughts. More than once she had said what he had somehow known she would.

Now, although she only shook her head, he was certain that he understood what puzzled and came near to infuriating the others. In their present mood she could not trust them to take one mouthful each—and if anyone drank more it would result in blows.

They waited in silence as the darkness spread like a thick black liquid seeping through the sky. Yet it was not quite black. It became veined with curious colours—mauve and orange, violet and crimson. At first faint, these grew in intensity, silent explosions cracking the vault of cloud.

An hour passed. The murk covered the whole sky, and occasional convulsions of light from behind the dark mass were so brilliant that the three men and the woman were blinded. They heard growling noises—deep, menacing, but indistinct. Here and there about them were splashes as if fish were jumping.

The growling noises became more frequent. And then the whole thing burst with a crash which numbed the senses.

Down came the water. It was so different from normal rain that for a little while they crouched away from it, frightened. It was only when it forced its way between their lips that they realized it was fresh water. Then they put back their heads and opened their mouths wide.

It beat upon their faces. It streamed from their hair, over their cheeks and closed eyes, it poured like a running tap from their noses. It battered them, but they held their cupped hands under their chins to catch more.

At first they could scarcely swallow. Then their throats became lubricated and they gulped it down—on and on and on. The thirst they had felt when they found the submarine had been nothing. Now their sand-dry bodies seemed able to absorb an infinite quantity, and still they wanted more. They even dropped on their knees to suck up the water in greater quantities from the bottom of the float.

They drank and drank under the deluge until at last it was impossible to swallow any more. They were still thirsty but there was no room for any more inside them.

The waterfall continued. The rain was cold, and they huddled, shivering, sitting on the edge of the float with their feet in water and their ears full of the noise, which was like a cataract.

Gradually the descending water changed to ordinary rain which fell more and more lightly until at last it stopped. And simultaneously the sky was clear. The stars lit up again and in the wonderfully clear air they shone more brilliantly than ever before. The ocean appeared limitless under their light, a vast plane of space.

On the tiny extraneous speck in the middle of it the human beings were very cold indeed. They were not used to cold and in any case their resistance was low. Their craft had changed from a float to a water trough three parts full. But they could not bring themselves to jettison their priceless cargo, so they sat with their feet in it and shivered.

Then Sea-Wyf handed round some hard tack. But, damp though it was, they found it difficult to chew because their gums were sore. It took them a long time to masticate and swallow it.

At last the sun came up. Their luck appeared to have changed, for that afternoon another gull appeared. It had been battered by the storm and was completely exhausted. It settled on the float and was killed without difficulty.

No longer ravenous, they ate it slowly, even with a hint of manners. Sea-Wyf accepted a piece. They talked together politely, and laughed. Their skins were clean of salt, perfectly clean and fresh for the first time. They were all elated, amicable and hopeful. If only they had a wind they would soon get somewhere.

Towards evening a breeze blew up—a fair wind from the east. The brave little float began to trundle rather heavily along.

The wind increased and waves began to come over the side. That was serious. In an attempt to prevent it the sail was lowered. But the wind grew stronger and waves still leaped on board, more and more of them.

Within an hour the water in the float was not only brackish but dangerously high. It was necessary to bail. Without a sail the float spun round and round and tipped at every angle. They were sea-sick.

After sunset the wind dropped away—but not as low as their spirits. Their net gain had been half a container of fresh water—a few mouthfuls each.

What was the good of going on trying, torturing themselves? They sat brooding in the darkness, and when their legs became entangled in the pool in the middle of the floor, they kicked out petulantly.

They hated each other and, very nearly, life itself.

To be continued next week

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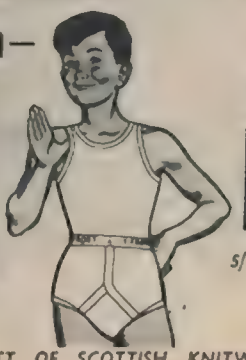

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THE MAN WHO LIVED TWICE

Continued from page 20

stay at one of the lesser hotels in Monte Carlo. Here the least expected thing happened: he fell in love. Staying in the same hotel was Marjorie Walters, an English girl who was convalescing after a long illness.

These two explored small places in the mountains, gambled mildly, discovered—or thought they discovered—restaurants all along the coast.

In the pleasant company of Marjorie Walters, who was an altogether wholesome girl, Stewart McWatt achieved the nearest he was ever destined to achieve to contentment of mind. The fact that his *alter ego* was a cold-blooded murderer receded into the background of consciousness until it assumed a comforting unreality.

Then Marjorie Walters returned to England by train, and McWatt was once more alone with himself and his thoughts. Her going emphasized his isolation. He felt it keenly that this Stewart McWatt, the creature of his own creation, had no friends, no enemies even, no habits, no clearly formed tastes, no associations, nobody dependent on him and nobody who cared a curse whether he lived or died.

The comic opera of Monte Carlo began to pall. Packing his bags, McWatt took off into the high mountains, intending to return to England via the French Alps, Switzerland and the Jura.

Some four hours after leaving the coast, McWatt drove into a tremendous thunderstorm. Lightning rent the skies while the thunderclaps were deafening in their intensity and seemingly immediately overhead. Then the rain began to fall, cutting visibility down to twenty or thirty yards at most. Once, missing the road, McWatt just braked the car to a standstill on the brink of a precipice. The narrowness of his escape unnerved him.

When, about twenty minutes later, a hotel sign loomed out of the driving rain he drove thankfully into the courtyard and asked for a room. There was no difficulty about this, for it was the off-season and he was the only guest. Later in the evening others might take refuge from the weather, but until then he had the hotel to himself. It is a quality of hotels that to be tolerable they should hum with life; empty, they are chill and comfortless places.

Several times after night had fallen the lightning caused the electric fuses to blow, plunging the hotel into darkness. A surly girl brought candles. Thereafter the lightning affected the antiquated French telephone installation, so that with every flash the bell tinkled feebly. Nobody troubled to answer it until a long ring suggested that a call was coming through.

A foreigner in France, hearing a French person on the telephone, has the illusion that he or she is using the telephone for the first time. The volume of sound unleashed is tremendous, and so it seemed to McWatt, to whom it was doubly irritating because he knew no more French than the average English schoolboy knows, which is not much.

Then, after the hotel had been filled with sound and fury for about twenty minutes, someone came on the line and there came from the office downstairs more high-pitched shouting. Steps sounded on the uncarpeted stairs—the steps of someone in a breathless hurry. They came swiftly along the corridor and stopped outside McWatt's door, on which there was a thunderous knocking.

"What's the matter?" he asked in English.

"*On vous demande au téléphone, monsieur,*" said the agitated voice of the proprietor's daughter. McWatt had enough French to know that this meant he was wanted on the phone.

"Don't talk silly nonsense!" he said irritably. "How could anyone want me when nobody knows I'm here? Why, I don't even know where I am myself."

But the girl would not take no for an answer. Somebody, she insisted, wanted him. Meanwhile, from the office downstairs came the proprietor's angry bellowings, which vied with the storm still raging outside. When it became apparent to McWatt that the hotelkeeper and his daughter would give him no peace until he went down to the telephone, he consented with poor grace and followed the girl down to the office.

With a mixture of triumph and despair and the Gallic genius for making a drama out of a trifle, the proprietor thrust the receiver at him, making it clear that he now washed his hands of the whole distasteful business.

"Hallo," said McWatt, in English. "Who is it that you want?"

Then, the blood draining out of his face, and his eyes rounded with sheer terror, he staggered as though under the impact of a blow.

"It isn't true," he muttered. "It isn't true. It can't be true. Nobody knows I'm here. It's impossible. He's dead, I tell you, dead and buried and forgotten. Why ask me?"

Two people had their eyes fixed on McWatt during these moments of stress and, as they testified later, they watched as he allowed the telephone instrument to drop from his limp hand, wondering as they did so what horrific message had come to him through the stormy night. Then, demented with terror, he staggered out into the driving rain, climbed into the car and, racing the engine madly, disappeared into the night. About four miles distant, at the bottom of a steep hill, the car went into a skid and was brought to a stop by side-swiping a tree.

Dazed by the concussion, Stewart McWatt got out of the car and, disregarding the torrential rain, staggered away into the darkness.

There was nobody to see him, for the accident had occurred in a remote spot and there was no human habitation within three miles. He ran down a steep goat track into the valley, obsessed by the idea of putting as much distance as possible between himself and the accursed telephone.

A shepherd found McWatt some twelve hours later, shivering and in a raging fever. The police, who had learned something from the hotel proprietor and had found the damaged car with British registration, decided that here was something for the British consul to deal with.

Accordingly, the consular authorities were notified and an ambulance took McWatt down to the coast and deposited him in the Anglo-American Hospital in Nice. Here, his ravings being in English, they were understood, and the more loudly he denied being Edward Langley, the more strange it appeared. Over and over again, he persisted: "My name is Stewart McWatt, I tell you. Edward Langley's dead, dead, do you hear?"

When the telephone rang he became frenzied with fear and at times had to be forcibly restrained from leaving his bed.

The gist of all this was sent to London by the consular authorities, actuated merely by a desire to locate the sick man's relatives and to notify them of his condition.

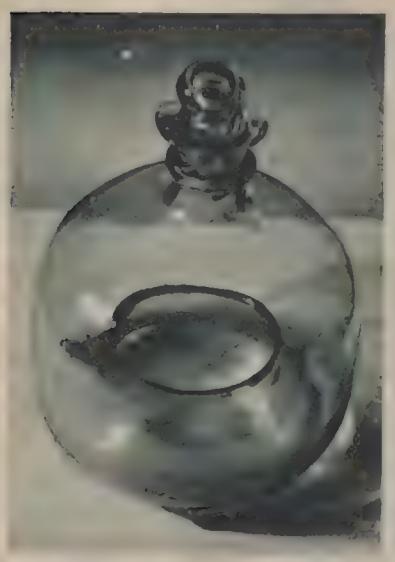
The police were asked to co-operate, and it was a policeman with a well-developed bump of curiosity who applied himself to finding out why a man named Stewart McWatt should insist so vehemently that he was not Edward Langley because Edward Langley was dead.

Then the latter name came to light as that of a victim of the fire which had destroyed the house belonging to Henry Ounsell in Hallgrove Gardens, Willesden.

In the police dossier on the fire which had caused the deaths of Henry Ounsell and Edward Langley only one suspicious observation had been noted. One sentence stood out from the rest in the schoolboy handwriting of a detective who had made the inquiries: "The deceased, Henry Ounsell, long suspected of being a receiver, was known to keep large sums of money in the house, but his safe was found

Guess What?

by GLYN DANIEL



THIS glass vessel has a hole in the bottom, and stands on three small feet. A century ago you might have seen it in the shops. It is twelve inches high and has a tight, glass stopper; others like it varied in size, but they all served the same purpose. Is it . . .

(a) An air purifier?
(b) A gardener's cloche?
(c) A fly-catcher?
(d) A pot-pourri jar?

Glyn Daniel tells you more on page 41

to contain almost nothing of value."

Despite the inquest verdict, it was decided to reopen the inquiry.

Scotland Yard sent a man out to France to make inquiries on the spot. He went straight to the heart of the matter. He wanted to know precisely what had been said to Stewart McWatt over the telephone on the night of the storm, and by whom.

Accordingly, with the assistance of the French police, he was taken to see the telephone operator at the exchange which served the mountain hotel where McWatt had been staying, and from which he had fled, panic stricken.

It emerged that some English tourists in Nice wanted to speak to some English friends who had planned to spend the night at the hotel, but had been held up by the weather. On being informed that there was, in fact, an Englishman staying in the hotel, the operator asked for him.

"Then," said the detective, "the hotel-keeper fetched the Englishman. Is that it?"

"Yes, monsieur," replied the operator.

"Now what I would like to know is just what you said to him which had the effect of terrifying him. Can you remember?"

"I remember perfectly, monsieur. First I asked him to wait. *'Attendez un instant,'* I told him. Then I spoke to the operator in Nice, telling her that he was on the line and waiting to speak. *'Monsieur l'anglais est ici'* is what I said."

"Thank you, mademoiselle," said the man from Scotland Yard. "You have told me everything I need to know."

Edward Langley would disagree with Shakespeare when he said that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, for the sobering fact is that if he had been Monsieur Smith, or Monsieur Jones, or indeed Monsieur anything else but Langley, a guilty conscience would not have caused him to panic when he heard himself referred to on the telephone as *"Monsieur l'anglais."* THE END

FIRST LOVES

Continued from page 25

could talk only about machinery. But Belinda did not seem to mind that; when he talked too much about Marie-Louise she skilfully steered the conversation to Joe and then to herself. But at this point Joe always became tongue-tied, and Belinda sighed inwardly and began all over again.

At first, Ma Chisholm used to drag herself along to the roundabout to see how the new girl was shaping. She had to admit that Belinda was doing well. She had a pleasant word for the children, a gay smile for their parents and a sidelong look for the young men that tempted them back for another sixpennyworth.

Those sidelong looks hurt Joe, but he said nothing. He had no thought of daring to tell her that he loved her; he was content to love.

On the road to Murrinport, at the tail of the convoy, they passed a big lorry and a streamlined trailer caravan parked by the roadside. "DAN COX, THE DARING WALL OF DEATH RIDER. THRILLS GALORE!" was painted on the lorry. Through his driving mirror, Joe saw the lorry swing recklessly from the roadside and join on behind them.

"Looks like a new tenant," he said to Belinda, riding with him.

A few miles along the road he heard an imperious hooting behind; through his mirror he saw the Wall of Death lorry already swinging out. There was barely room to pass, but Joe pulled his wheel over. His heavy lorry jolted and bumped on the raised grass verge, and Belinda slid along the shiny leather seat towards him. The other lorry accelerated furiously and cut in. To avoid the lurching caravan Joe had to stamp on his brakes. Belinda was thrown violently against him.

Still shaken, without quite realizing what he was doing, Joe put his arm around her, and at once her head relaxed on his chest and her hair brushed his lips softly. She turned her face towards his. In that extraordinary moment, Joe bent to kiss her—but his courage failed. He took his arms away and pressed the starter.

"That was a close shave," he muttered, nodding towards the caravan in the distance. "Better keep up with the convoy."

Belinda straightened herself on the seat and shook her hair into place. "A very close shave," she murmured, half amused, half furious.

WHEN the convoy got to the common at Murrinport, Joe jumped out of the cab and, with Belinda following, walked over to the lorry that had overtaken them. A lithe, agile man was uncoupling the trailer.

"Were you driving?" Joe asked.

The man straightened up. "That's right," he said. "I'm Dan Cox."

"You want to be more careful," Joe said. "There could have been an accident."

"There could have been," the man said, but he was smiling at Belinda. "You want to keep your attention on the road in future."

Joe opened his mouth and closed it again sharply. He didn't want to get into a fight with Belinda there.

"Well, just watch it," he said thickly, and walked back to the cab. Belinda followed him quite slowly.

That evening Joe watched the girl holidaymakers queueing to see Dan Cox hurtle round the inverted wooden dome on his noisy motor-cycle.

Between rides, Cox walked through the fairground in his leather breeches, swinging his crash-helmet and chatting easily like a film star to his girl admirers. He caught a glimpse of Belinda's slender body in her scarlet blouse and strolled nearer.

"Hello, Beautiful," he said.

"Hello, Daring," she replied, laughing.

"How about coming to *my* show?"

"I'm busy," said Belinda.

"Come on, the disc-jockey will take the pennies," he said, nodding at Joe.

Belinda laughed, but turned away to collect the money.

"Tonight?" called Dan.

Belinda's reply was swamped by the

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organ as Joe fed the paper into it. But he noticed that she gazed after Dan as he walked back to his Wall of Death.

All next morning the rain pelted down, and the holidaymakers stayed in their hotels and boarding houses. At the swamped fairground, Belinda wandered over to the Skyrocket, where Joe was repairing a motor, and sat watching him, listening to the rain drumming on the canvas roof.

At last she said: "Joe."

"Yes?"

"Joe, Dan Cox has asked me to join his act. He wants to make it Daring Dan and Beautiful Belinda, with me riding on his shoulders."

"Are you going to accept?"

"What do you think?"

"Could you do it?"

She shrugged. "He says it's easy."

Joe was silent. Then, unable to say what was in his mind, "It will hit Ma Chisholm. She relies on you now."

She gave him an odd look. "Yes, it will hit Ma Chisholm," she echoed. "But Joe, what do *you* think?"

He tightened a couple of nuts before he answered. "You must do what you think best. It's your life."

Without another word she pulled the hood of her oilskin over her head and walked away in the driving rain.

Towards the evening the black clouds rolled away to the moors behind, and stayed there, motionless. The fishermen on the quay stared at them and told each other that the moor folk would be washed out, but at Murrinport the sun shone warmly. The flood water on the fairground gradually soaked away, and the grass began to steam. The holidaymakers poured out, and business was good.

"Last ride," Joe told Belinda at ten o'clock, for Murrinport Council objected to fairground noises after that time. Thankfully, Belinda carried her heavy collecting bag to Ma Chisholm in her caravan, parked with the others —again by order of the council—a few hundred yards from the fairground.

Joe watched her go. He also watched Dan Cox toss his crash-helmet to a mechanic and stroll towards Ma Chisholm's van. When Belinda came out he was waiting for her; she smiled and put her hand in his, and they walked off towards the sea.

AUTOMATICALLY, following his nightly routine, Joe turned to Marie-Louise to rake out the coals, and opened the furnace door. He turned to look again at Belinda and Dan Cox; they had left the path across the common and were making for the secluded little garden overlooking the quayside.

A blind fury of jealousy swept over him, and a longing for violence that he had never experienced before. He seized the shovel and began to hurl coal into the firebox. When it was full he realized what he had done. The habit of years was strong, and in spite of his mental torment he knew that it was dangerous to leave Marie-Louise all night with a hot fire and a full head of steam. He grasped the rake and began to empty the firebox.

Across the quiet fairground he heard the clear laugh of a girl. Belinda. He threw down the rake with the job half done and slammed the furnace door shut with his foot. "To hell with you," he muttered savagely to Marie-Louise, and set off towards the hills.

He walked fast, cursing as he slipped on the sodden grass, kicking stones out of his way, forcing a path through a hedge instead of using the stile.

"To hell with you," he kept muttering, but now he meant Belinda more than Marie-Louise. As the hill got steeper he had to slow down, and his anger began to change.

It wasn't Belinda's fault, he thought. It was his own. Girls had no time for shy, tongue-tied chaps like him. They wanted gay, devil-may-care men like Dan. He should have kissed Belinda when she was thrown against him in the cab. He should have been ruthless about it, taking no notice of her protests. All right, he was going to be like that. From now on he was going to be tough and ruthless, and to hell with everybody else.

He came to the river that tumbled from the moors towards the sea at Vennor, a mile or so away. Usually, at this time of the year, he could walk across the stepping-stones. He walked along the bank looking for them, thinking of how he should have kissed Belinda, and how Dan Cox would be kissing her now. It took him some time to realize that the stepping-stones were no longer there, because the river was filled to the banks with flood water rushing down from the cloud-burst on the moors.

IMPATIENTLY he turned back towards the bridge that carried the lane leading upwards to the moors. The banks were sodden. A patch of white gleamed in the dark mouth of the bridge, and he craned his neck forward to see what it was. A tree trunk had stuck across the mouth, and the branches had acted like a sieve, catching the debris of the flood water until the mouth was almost blocked; the white patch was a dead, swollen sheep.

He stared down at the black water. It was rising at a frightening speed; he could see the line of dirty foam creeping forward inch by inch. He moved closer towards the bridge, and stepped back quickly as the ground gave way beneath him, for the water had risen as high as the bank and was already seeping over. As he watched a great portion of earth gave way, and the water edged it, trickling down the hill.

Down the hill! That was the way the water would go when the bank finally broke—straight down the rocky hillside, across the common where the caravans were parked, through the small hotels and boarding houses, into the gardens where Belinda was. He glanced up and down the moorland lane; there was no sign of a house, no car lights. He was on his own—and everything depended on him.

He began to run, and as he ran he heard the noise of the trickling water beginning to swell. There could not be many minutes before that trickle became a flood. He ran as he had never run before, racing wildly down the dark hill, unmindful of the rocks and shrubs. Twice he fell headlong, knocking the breath out of his body and almost stunning himself, but each time he picked himself up and raced on, sobbing for breath.

He was stumbling through the fairground towards the caravans, heart pumping, legs trembling, when he saw, a moment too late, an electric cable and tried to avoid it. He spun round on the mud and crashed against a rock.

At once he picked himself up, but the pain that shot through his right leg brought him down again. He tried to crawl, then, but he knew he could never reach the vans in time.

And now the water was on him, lapping over shoes and outstretched hands, and he dragged himself up, breath groaning, lungs aching, and blundered in agony to the roundabout. He pulled himself up on the platform and fell against a horse, fell heavily; but he could not stop now, and he dragged himself beneath the horses to the dais, and made it, and blindly reached for the steam-cock.

Marie-Louise's ancient pistons thrust gallantly in and then out, and the flywheel began to spin. He crawled behind the organ and felt for the keybox and the edge of the paper.

The fairground people were out first as the blatant din of "Colonel Bogey" shattered the night. The Boss opened his van door and began to bellow furiously: "Stop that row! Somebody get to Chisholm's and stop that row! Where's Joe?"

From every van, men poured to the roundabout. As they splashed into the water they stopped, puzzled, and then ran on to where Joe was lying in agony, pointing up to the hills and shouting: "The river! Warn the town!"

But the town had already been roused by "Colonel Bogey." Within ten minutes every man, woman and child in the danger zone had been hurried up to the old town.

Five minutes later the fairground and the hotels and shops by the quayside were standing feet deep in swirling water. Many were in ruins, smashed by the boulders and trees torn out of the hillside by the river as it finally broke down its banks. Cars parked on the quayside were hurled into the sea, fishing boats were splintered.

They said, next morning, that a hundred people might have died if they had not been warned in time. The chairman of the council, standing by Joe's bed in the cottage hospital, was moist-eyed. "You're a hero," he muttered. "You and your old hurdy-gurdy. . . ."

Besides the praise, there was £500 a few days later for Joe from an anonymous well-wisher. There was a little ceremony in the hospital ward, at which the Lord Lieutenant of the county himself handed the cheque to Joe, lying flushed and embarrassed as the photographers took their pictures. Ma Chisholm was there, and Belinda.

"And what are you going to do with the money?" asked the Lord Lieutenant genially.

"Get Ma Chisholm a new roundabout," grinned Joe.

"Don't be daft," said Ma. "I'm insured, aren't I? I'll be able to afford a generator and a panatrope this time, too."

WHEN Joe had been photographed again, the visitors drifted out. Belinda remained. She sat on his bed. "Joe, you know what you should do with the money? You should go to college and learn properly about machines and things. And then——"

He looked up at her. "And then?"

She laughed, ripping her coloured scarf from her shoulders and deftly knotting it under her chin, gipsy-fashion. She picked up the water carafe from the bedside table and held it between her palms, staring into it.

"I'll look into the future and tell you, Joe. . . . I see you as a famous engineer, with a big car and a fine house in London and a beautiful wife."

Joe had learned a lot in the last few days, and this time he managed to say it. "You?"

"Let me look closer. . . . No, she's not like me, Joe. She's not my type at all. I'm still in the West Country, still in a little caravan."

"With—with Dan Cox, I suppose?"

"Dan? He means nothing to me, Joe." She laid her hand on his. "You know that's true, don't you, Joe?"

Joe gazed at her, at the small enchanting face, at the lovely grey eyes busy with this problem, and found, astonishingly, that it did not greatly move him. So much had happened, so many new, exciting vistas had opened up. . . . He felt older, more experienced, and he nodded slowly.

"No, I'm still with the fair," Belinda said, pursuing the vision of herself. "That's where I belong, Joe, and I couldn't fit in anywhere else. But you belong where you can use your skill and become famous. I'll be just a memory—along with poor old Marie-Louise."

She dropped her half-mocking, half-mystical voice. "And that reminds me." She searched in her handbag and took out a photograph. "Look, this is the one you took last week. Marie-Louise and me. The two of us, Joe."

Joe gazed at it. Then he smiled and handed it back to Belinda, and the girl, catching in that moment some hint of the new authority in him and sensing his withdrawal, smiled back a little wistfully.

"Keep it," she said, and rose to go. "Keep it as a reminder of your first loves—and put it down to experience."

THE END

Guess What?

THE glass vessel on page 39 is a fly-catcher, often found on the counters of eighteenth and nineteenth century shops—especially if they sold food. It was partly filled with beer or syrup to attract the flies. They crawled inside from below—and drowned when they were unable to find the way out.

SHE CAME OFF her scooter. Now creamy Savlon soothes, and cleanses the wound —helps nature heal.

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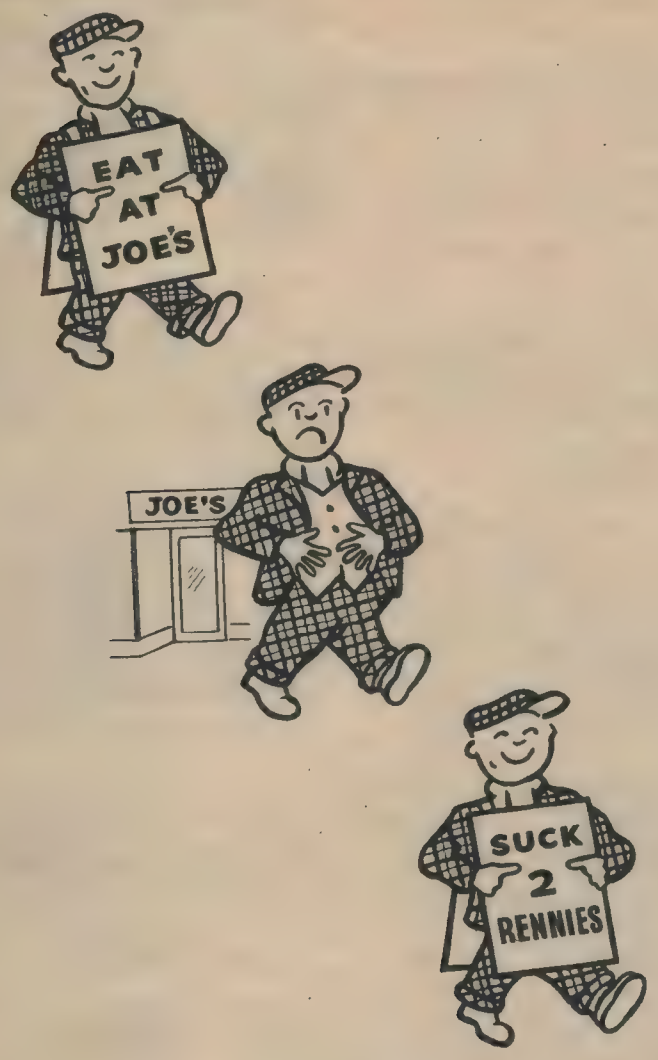

Drawing from life of a man who wasn't born yesterday, specially commissioned by the House of Whitbread from

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—and I know what they're getting when I call for

WHITBREAD

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WHITBREAD'S PALE ALE

SAHARA TREK

Continued from page 23

four-and-a-half gallons. For food I had two hard-boiled eggs, a dozen apples and, stowed away for an emergency just like this, two tins of military iron rations. It was not exactly luxury but it might be enough.

I knew many desert stories of people getting lost either by car or after a forced landing in a plane; in some cases the car or plane had been found, but the passenger had not been with it.

For some reason he had wandered into the desert. Perhaps it was the unbearable boredom which had driven him to walk off in a desperate bid for life. It was, of course, an almost sure way to die.

I decided that somehow I must guard against this. A hank of stout rope in the rear of the car gave me the answer. At the first sign of trouble I would bind my body with the rope and lash myself to the car. On the knots I would pour oil to swell the cord so that I could not untie it.

Hopeless Position

The time passed. I looked at my watch: it was about two-thirty now. There didn't seem to be the terrific glare on the sand as I looked. What was happening? I rolled out and stood up. In the whole of that vast blue sky there was one large cloud, and at this moment it was completely blotting out the sun. For the first time I was able to stand in the open and look at the car.

Walking ahead for about twenty paces I stubbed my heels into the sand; it was soft, very soft. I felt better now, the two hours' rest had done me good. Was there anything that I could do? The more I studied the situation the more hopeless it looked. Could one man ever get this car to move again? I decided to have a final try.

Getting out the shovel, I cleared the sand away from the front wheels and axle. Under the car it was impossible to use the shovel so I lay on my back and, with my hands and arms, scraped the sand away. It was hot work and took a long time, but eventually the underneath of the car was clear.

The next thing to be considered was weight. Opening all the doors, I started to drag out every movable object—jerry cans, suitcases, tools. I unscrewed the bolts of the roof rack and tied a piece of rope to one side. With one mighty heavy the whole thing slid to the ground.

Next I sorted out the few items which must be taken along: the water and food, my shotgun and twelve cartridges, the second spare wheel, jack and wheelbrace and one electric torch. I went round every tyre and let out the air until only about ten pounds pressure was left in. The car was ready now; there was nothing else that could be done.

I got in and pressed the starter; at the first touch the engine fired. As I let in the clutch, the car moved. Hardly daring to breathe, I accelerated away in bottom gear. We were out and on the move again. I managed to change into second gear and, by running the engine fast, ploughed ahead. This was asking for engine trouble. We had only gone about five miles before I noticed the engine temperature rising fast; another two miles and the water was boiling.

I must stop, but where? Desperately I looked round for a patch of rocky ground. I spotted a place which looked more solid than most and pulled up. The steam was pouring out from the bonnet. It would be at least half-an-hour before I dared think of putting water in.

Putting water in! That was a nasty thought. It would take about a gallon, and then after another ten miles another gallon. I wasn't going to put my only drinking water into the radiator; whatever happened I must keep that water.

The obvious solution was to wait for the cool of the night. But even as I stood there waiting for the engine to cool down, I could feel a gentle breeze getting up.

In the Sahara, a gentle breeze can very quickly become a raging sandstorm. What chances then of following the tracks? Those wheelmarks in the sand were my only guide to safety. If a wind got up they would be quickly obliterated.

I pondered over this new problem for some time. I decided that I must not risk waiting and that I must not use up all my water in the radiator. Luckily there was a temperature gauge fitted and I decided that the only way out was to drive as fast as I could until the gauge approached boiling point.

I must then stop and let the engine cool down before starting again. As the night became cooler, my stops would become less frequent.

Having waited for forty minutes, I found the engine cool enough to top up the radiator. It took a little more than a gallon. As I drove desperately on, I found myself nodding over the wheel. My eyelids would close and it was a job to force them open. I was dreading the moment when I should have to stop again. If I fell asleep, it might be a day before I woke again. And the breeze had increased.

As the temperature gauge reached boiling point I pulled up. To keep awake, I tried walking round the car, dabbing my face with a wet rag, but it was no good. Wind or no wind, I had to rest. Throwing my coat on the ground, I lay down beside the car. Before shutting my eyes I remember repeating to myself, "I must only sleep for one hour. I must only sleep for one hour."

With a sudden start I awoke; it was almost dark. Still the wind was blowing and it was cooler.

Hastily I glanced at the watch on my wrist. I couldn't believe it. I had been asleep for exactly one hour and ten minutes.

I started off again, feeling that now I must be getting close to In Guezzam. Suddenly, without any warning, a little pyramid of stones appeared in the headlight beam. It was a route marker, the symbol of safety for which I had been searching for almost two hundred miles. It meant that I had once again found the recognized route across the Sahara.

Crazy With Fatigue

As I drove on to the track, I turned north for In Guezzam. The feeling of relief was overwhelming. Almost pushing my feet through the floor boards I raced along the track with the tyres still nearly flat. I was flopping over the wheel and half crazy with fatigue. And then I saw it, the hurricane lantern standing at one corner of the fort—In Guezzam.

My headlights picked up the gateway and I swung in and slithered to a standstill. I collapsed over the wheel with both hands pressing the horn button. The wireless operator came rushing out, followed by Monsieur le Patron. They helped me out of the car and into the hotel. It was two o'clock in

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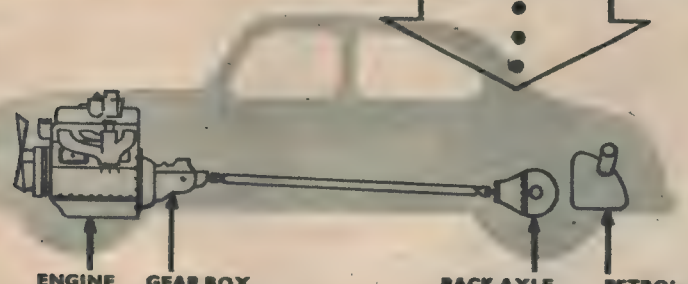

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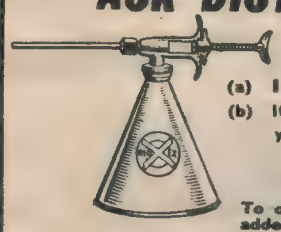

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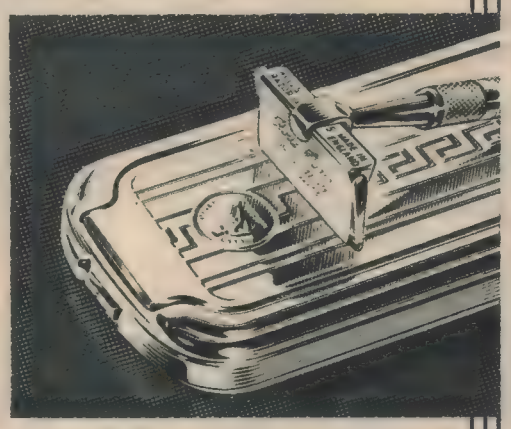

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It's The Custom . . . in INNERLEITHEN

Saint (with crozier) and monks : they fight the De'il—weather permitting

St. Ronan's boys march to burn the De'il

THERE was a big disappointment for St. Ronan last year. Because of heavy rain at Innerleithen in Peeblesshire, he was not allowed to burn the De'il. "He had to stay down in the town with his monks while some of the committee went up Caerlee Hill and lit the pyre," says Agnes Knox, whose son Robert was playing St. Ronan.

Burning the De'il in effigy is the climax of a week of celebrations and festivities called the Cleikum Ceremonies. According to legend, St. Ronan had a fight with the Devil twelve hundred years ago on the heights above Innerleithen. He hooked his *cleik*, or crozier, round the Devil's leg and tripped him. Then he threw him on a fire.

Nowadays, the boy who is the dux (top boy) of Innerleithen primary school is installed as St. Ronan at a ceremony held in the town's Memorial Hall on the day before the burning, which takes place on the third Saturday in August. He wears cream and red robes and is attended by his monks—boys who have topped their class at school.

"St. Ronan usually carries off his installation without mishap," says an Innerleithen man. "But I remember one boy who was so overcome by nervousness and excitement that he had to leave the stage right in the middle of things."

The installation is followed by a concert. Next morning, St. Ronan and his retinue, pipe and brass bands, and all the schoolchildren of Innerleithen walk in procession through the town. In the afternoon St. Ronan's Border Games are held. The Cleikum Ceremonies in their present form began in 1901. The border games date from 1827.

At about ten o'clock on the Saturday evening, St. Ronan and his attendants leave the Liberal Club building and set off to Caerlee Hill, a round, bald hill immediately behind the town. With them, carried on a pole, goes Innerleithen's famous De'il with its carved wooden head painted bright red, horns, and matted grey hair.

At Caerlee Hill a crowd waits for the arrival of the procession. Then the fire is lit, and as it blazes St. Ronan, his monks and the De'il dance, and a duplicate effigy of the Devil is thrown on to the flames to rid Innerleithen of evil for the coming year.

the morning and I was shaking with cold. Brandy was quickly produced, followed by a huge mug of steaming coffee.

After half-an-hour I felt sufficiently refreshed to start telling my friends the sad story. For a moment the most important thing was to rescue Peter. The first suggestion was that an aircraft should be flown out from Algiers to pick him up and get him to a hospital, but this plan could not be carried out.

In fact, it took two days to organize the rescue party and for me, anxious for Peter's safety, the time passed with agonizing slowness. A rescue vehicle was to be sent from Tamanraset by the S.A.T.T., the organization which controls all traffic across the Sahara; in addition, some French soldiers from a military camp about fifty miles away had volunteered to help.

The soldiers arrived first, at about eleven in the morning. They were a picturesque crowd : a lieutenant and his second-in-command—a great, bearded and burly Frenchman about six feet three—and with them a sergeant and a native corporal driver.

These men were veterans of the Sahara, they knew it in all its moods, they lived in it and battled against it day after day, month after month. They had a six-wheeled lorry. In racks beside the driver were slung two rifles. Under the floorboards was a complete set of spare parts and in another compartment there were tins of food, a cooking stove, planks and shovels.

I learned from these men that the phantom tracks we had followed away from the marked route had been made by the lorries of an army unit on manoeuvres. That explained why they had led us on to get lost in the desert, instead of taking us to Agades.

Not long after, the S.A.T.T. vehicle arrived and at last we were ready to set off. It was arranged that I should travel in the army truck to lead the way along my route; the S.A.T.T. vehicle was to follow. Standing up in front beside the driver, I scanned the road for our tracks, and after about four miles we found them and turned off from the main route.

Tracks in the sand, undisturbed and clear, the only link between us and Peter. We sped on. What a difference it made to have company! Here everything was prepared and organized; it was a straightforward journey now, no longer a desperate adventure. I saw the country for the first time in daylight; it was wild and rough, a barren waste of rock and sand with dunes stretching away into the distance. The French could not believe that I had twice driven over this route in a light car at night.

At about two in the morning we entered the area of tall vegetation and now it became difficult to follow the tracks. The bushes I had pressed down were almost upright again. Time after time we had to stop and search the ground ahead for clues—a broken twig here, or a freshly disturbed chunk of rock there.

After an hour or so of this slow going, the lieutenant gave orders to halt and camp for the rest of the night. We might, he said, lose the track and have trouble finding it again.

Next morning, twenty-five miles showed on the milometer when we spotted several camels away in the distance. We were getting near now, and I stood up in front on the seat searching through the glasses. And then ahead we saw them, a small bunch of people madly waving their arms.

With a screaming of brakes we slithered to a standstill in a great cloud of dust. Standing there beside the track were my Tuareg friends, and with them was Peter.

Terrible Experiences

He smiled as I jumped off the truck and grabbed his hand: "You've been a mighty long time, Ralph," he said.

"Gosh, it's good to see you," was all I could say.

He had made a wonderful recovery. There was very little to show of the terrible experiences he had been through. He looked very rough, of course. His hair was standing up in all directions and a week's stubble of black beard covered his very yellow face.

"Have a cigarette, Peter?"

"Thanks, I've been wanting one for a long time."

I took old Ali the Tuareg by the hand, and as I did so, the native corporal explained that I thanked him and his people very much. After that his whole family came up to shake hands.

I took five one thousand franc notes from my pocket, gave two to Ali and one each to the other men. As we boarded the truck and once again drove off towards In Guezzam, they waved until we were out of sight.

The next morning we decided to drive our car back to Tamanraset. I sent a cable to Nuffields in England and then we had a thorough look over the car.

After the fantastic thrashing the Wolseley had taken, I could find nothing broken, nor was there anything which did not work. We reached Tamanraset around nine in the evening. This, we decided, would have to be the end of our adventure.

The hotel was well lighted and looked most inviting. As we stepped from the car Johnny, the manager, came running out to greet us. Quickly we were ushered into the bar and a bottle of champagne produced. They were a gay crowd in Johnny's bar. French Sahara soldiers and their wives, the postmaster, the doctor, and a couple of missionaries.

Talked Till Dawn

Our trip was the main topic of conversation in the hotel that evening. We talked on and on and it was early morning when eventually we went to bed.

A reply to our cable came through from the Nuffield agents in Algiers: TRAVEL BACK TO ALGIERS BY NEXT PLANE, SEATS BOOKED.

On the night before our departure we held a farewell party in Johnny's bar. It was then that he said to me with a knowing look: "You will be back, monsieur."

I said that the Sahara for me was *finis*. Now, of course, I know that Johnny was right. At the earliest possible moment I shall go back. I mean to break that record. THE END

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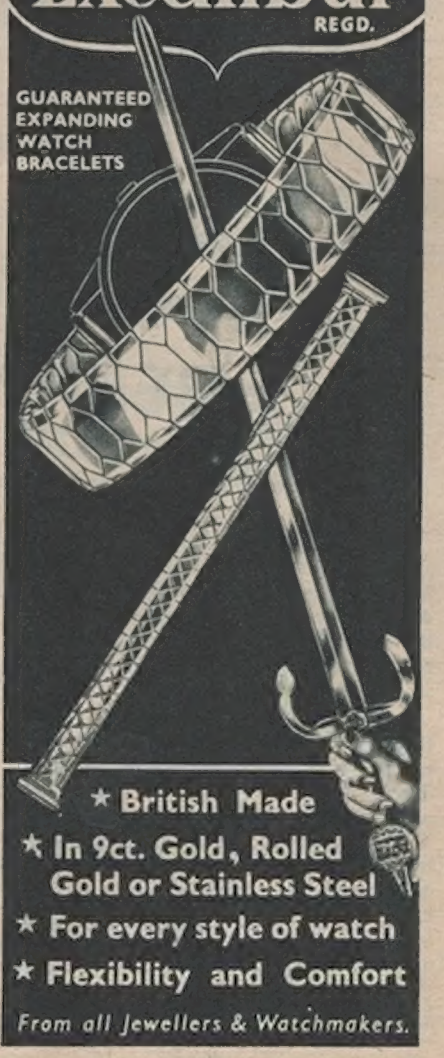

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With almost every kind of pain there is one place where it has got to be stopped . . . the 'nerve exchange', where all danger messages are received and translated into terms of pain. 'Anadin' takes effect against every kind of pain right at this spot. Here is how and why 'Anadin' gives you the power to stop pain.

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Ordinary laxatives couldn't free her from sluggishness and undigested fats—

She is a new woman since taking

BILE BEANS LAXATIVE PLUS

Are you constipated, sluggish, liverish, troubled with indigestion? A faulty digestion or sluggish liver may be causing undigested fats and harmful food wastes to accumulate. These can be responsible for many common ills.

A single-purpose laxative has only limited effect. Attack the *cause* of the trouble with Bile Beans Laxative Plus. These will not only clear away toxic food wastes. They also contain an extra ingredient—tauroglycocholate—recommended by doctors everywhere for breaking up and disposing of undigested fats in such a way that you enjoy the fullest benefit from the valuable A, D and E vitamins in your food. Bile Beans Laxative Plus thus tone up and improve your health and general well-being.

You, too, would be better taking BILE BEANS LAXATIVE PLUS

MR. PASTRY'S BREAD AND BUTTER COMEDY

Continued from page 17

features, humorous blue eyes and a lithe, athletic figure, he has a bounce that completely belies his stage make-up.

One critic described Mr. Pastry as "looking elderly, sincere and dangerously agile—like the nice uncle people avoid talking about." Hearne admits that once he dons his make-up, he automatically assumes the cranky walk, pronounced stoop and vague air of idiocy that are features of his characterization. "I feel an immediate urge to get up to Mr. Pastry's kind of tricks," he says.

Hearne's friends and colleagues are frequently amused by his unconscious habit of talking about Mr. Pastry in the third person. The extent of his absorption in the character has helped him through when one of his numerous slapstick effects has gone wrong. In one TV show, Hearne, as Mr. Pastry, was demonstrating how to mend a faulty stove and was to be showered with soot from the stove pipe immediately before the exit line: "Next week I'll show you how to decarbonize a steamroller."

An effects man released the soot too early and Hearne, standing with his mouth open, received it full in the face. Unable to speak, he had to mime his way out of camera range. "His impromptu exit was perfect Pastry," says a B.B.C. producer. "It was so good that he never complained about the error."

Hearne—and Mr. Pastry—conduct a constant search for new comedy ideas. Almost completely independent of script writers—"no one else is crazy enough to think up the situations"—he worked his way through thirty-six original scripts in the first eighteen months of postwar television broadcasting and is now forced to explore domestic jobs like paperhanging and gardening for a slapstick twist.

He made the erection of a television aerial at his home the subject of a complete sketch, with him clambering unsteadily over his own roof.

Hearne owns an extensive workshop equipped with a forge and anvil, and when necessary he makes properties of surprising complexity. When he wanted a trick bicycle for one sketch, he bought an old frame and worked all night to equip it with collapsible handlebars, folding pedals and wheels which flew off at a touch.

Hearne's stage career began at the age of six weeks when he appeared with his mother, a straight actress, as the baby in a play called *For The Sake of a Child*. His father was a member of an acrobatic act and Richard began to learn falls and acrobatic routines as soon as he could walk. His only formal schooling was through reading correspondence courses. "But I spent a lot of time finding out how to avoid dislocations, bruises and cuts," he says. "It worked on a process of elimination. If you hurt yourself in a fall it was your own fault if you did it that way again."

For several years, Hearne appeared with his father in a circus, assisting in an acrobatic act and working as a clown.

His first appearance in the West End was in pantomime at the London Hippodrome, where he was a member of an acrobatic act called the Three Marinos. Early in the show's run, Hearne overheard the producer say to one of the principals: "That acrobat Hearne—he can talk!" As a result, when half the cast were laid low by a flu epidemic, he was pushed on to speak the lines of half a dozen characters, including the Demon King.

Leslie Henson was also appearing in the pantomime. Impressed by Hearne's good looks and acting ability, he offered him a part in his next musical show, *Nice Goings On*, at the Gaiety Theatre. Hearne expected to be cast as a juvenile lead, but found that he was to play an old man of sixty-five—the forerunner of Mr. Pastry. He did so well that the character became established almost overnight and, teaming up with Henson and Fred Emney, he was featured in a run of musical successes that lasted until the war.

When regular television programmes began in 1937, Hearne's type of comedy quickly established him as one of the first "names" of the new medium.

During the war Hearne travelled long distances entertaining Servicemen, and landed in Normandy shortly after D-day. When the television service was resumed after the war, Hearne's talents were again in demand.

In 1947, he tried another new medium. Impresario Tom Arnold, who was planning a new ice show, rang him up to offer him a star part if he could skate. Hearne assured him that he could—and then phoned the Queen's Club to arrange for lessons.

Historical Home

Today Hearne lives with his wife, a former Gaiety showgirl, and two daughters, Cetra and Sarah, in a fourteenth-century farmhouse near Sevenoaks in Kent. When he took it over, the house was derelict, although the foundations and structure were perfect. Removing broken-down partitions and ceilings, he discovered a wealth of oak timbering and open hearth fireplaces.

He began restoration work and the building is now classified under "Buildings and Monuments of Historical Interest". It is protected by law from alteration or demolition.

According to his wife Yvonne, Hearne rarely sits down for more than a few minutes at a time. Part of his excessive energy is expended on athletic practical jokes. Travelling down to Sevenoaks by train on one occasion with his neighbours, stage stars Cyril Ritchard and Madge Elliott, he was chatting animatedly when the train went into a lengthy tunnel. When it emerged at the other end he had vanished. His companions discovered him lying in the luggage rack above their heads.

THE END

FOOTBALL DIRECTOR WINS £500 for a "BULLET"!

MEET a director of the famous Hibernians. Here is Mr. W. Terris (45 Queen Street, Edinburgh), who headed *Bullets* 1,993rd list of winners with this neat comment on a point remote from football: A GOOD DAY'S WORK—DAILY, *Old-fashioned* "NATIONAL SERVICE." His reward was £500 and a "day of dreams" in London.

With the £500 *you* can win this week goes a celebration *weekend* in London for two—a round of thrills, plus laughs with Tommy Trinder at *Bullets* Birthday Party.

PRIZES and GIFTS THIS WEEK VALUE OVER £1,000

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Weekend Celebration includes "Welcome to London" reception on Friday, November 4—Sightseeing Tour including Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle—Stalls for West End theatre—Visit to "Cinerama," biggest movie sensation of 1955—Novel surprises at *Bullets* 43rd Birthday Party and

MEET the famous TOMMY TRINDER

OTHER AWARDS: £25, £10, £9, £8, £7, £6, 3 of £5, 10 of £2 10s., 50 "Bullets" Seasons, 500 "Ten-Shot" Prizes, 1,000 "Good Shot" Awards and UNLIMITED GIFTS — see below

THIS WAY TO £500 and PARTY

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* below. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

Smiling World
War On Ugliness
Green Pastures
Tide Of Progress
Plumber Butler
A Little Down And
Visitor From Moscow
That Ring
Heir To A Million
A Birthday Treat
Dark Doubts
Pat On The Back
Without Flinching
Just Like An Expert
Blew Up
In A Piping Treble

Growing Wings
The Brute
Holidays Are Lovely, But

Incomplete "Examples" —see instructions

Clamouring For.....
Didn't.....Enough
If Only It Were.....
Oozing.....
A Fiery.....
Put.....In The Shade

★ Scrambled "Example"
NOYELL
(2-Minute Teaser—rearrange letters to make extra one-word "Example")

Chief Winners No. 1,997

FIRST PRIZE, £500 plus Motoring Holiday for Two: Mrs. M. E. Dusting, 104 Hollingbury Park Avenue, Brighton:

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£25: Miss M. Palgrean, "Yarwood," 10 Cranleigh Avenue, Sneyd Green, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent: IF MAN IS WISE—*War Cold*, DECADE HENCE!

£10: J. H. Collins, 4 The Common, Ashtead: PROSPERITY'S CARNIVAL—QUEEN—PEACE, CARRYING WHEAT.

OTHER AWARDS: £9: G. Smart, 7 Kensington Grove, Denton, Manchester: BLESSINGS OF HOME—"EMBRACING" *You?* HUG *Her*! £8: A. E. Jordan, 7 Highfield Gardens, Grays: EXPECTING THE WORST—"DAMPS" STYLE—STAMPS "DIAL"! £7: E. J. Chapman, Holmdene, Meadway, Haslemere: WATER IN OUR VILLAGE—EITHER NEEDED—OR KNEE-DEEP! £6: W. Whitaker, 65 Conway Road, Treorchy: UP AND UP AND UP — POPULATION, CHALLENGING "CLIMBER" SCIENCE. £5: C. F. Blackwell, Victoria Hall, Norfolk Street, Sheffield: BOTTLENECK IN OUR VILLAGE—WIDENED—TO BUILD *Pub*! £5: C. Cole, 36 Manchester Street, Southampton: NEGLECTED—BRAKES—TO FIT *Mascot*! £5: A. W. Pettitt, "Caledonian," 17 St. John's Green, Colchester: LIFE IN OUR VILLAGE—STOPS—SOMEONE'S SPOTTED *Midwife*!

For ten winners of £2 10s., see "*Bullets*" *Bulletin*. 50 *Bullets* Seasons, 500 "Ten-Shot" Awards and 1,000 "Good Shot" Prizes have also been posted.

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BULLET
EX ..... 6d.
B
EX ..... 6d.
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EX ..... 6d.
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EX ..... 6d.
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2,002 CLOSING POSTMARK MONDAY, AUGUST 29

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SIMPLY make an entry of FIVE or more *Bullets* for this week's Cash-plus-Celebration Prize Award. Address and enclose this Gift Label with your entry—and you will receive FREE and POST-FREE your £750,000 Cavalcade, packed with practical help for would-be winners.

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RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit; the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. as indicated. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. Make P.O. payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that result of this Contest (in "*Bullets*" *Bulletin* dated Sept. 17 and in JOHN BULL dated Sept. 24), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, Sept. 10, for early news of No. 2,002 result.)

POST BY MON., AUGUST 29

"Bullets" 2,002, "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.).

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39 Rev B

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An ingredient you can't see

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